

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2001 Session

**FISCAL NOTE**  
**Revised**

House Bill 663 (Delegates Benson and Vallario)

Environmental Matters

Finance

---

**Inmates - Telephone Charges**

---

This bill requires the following two studies to be conducted regarding telecommunications services for inmates: (1) the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) must survey the telephone services plans and contracts used by the federal government and other states and explore additional alternative communications plans; and (2) the Office of Legislative Audits in the Department of Legislative Services must analyze each contract for telecommunications services for inmates that has been entered into by the State, Baltimore City, or a county and compare the contracts and specify how commissions from the contract are expended.

DPSCS must report study results to the General Assembly and the Public Service Commission by December 31, 2001. The Office of Legislative Audits must report its findings by December 1, 2001 to the House Environmental Matters Committee, the House Judiciary Committee, and the Senate Finance Committee. DPSCS, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Baltimore City, and each county is required to provide whatever information is requested by the Legislative Auditor for the study.

The bill is effective July 1, 2001.

---

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill's requirements could be handled with the existing budgeted resources of DPSCS, DBM, and the Office of Legislative Audits.

**Local Effect:** It is assumed that complying with requests for information from the Legislative Auditor could be handled with existing budgeted resources.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

---

## Analysis

**Current Law:** None applicable.

**Background:** There are two current contracts for telephone service in State facilities. Verizon Communications has the contract for local calling service, and AT&T is the long-distance carrier. Both contracts are due to expire in fiscal 2001, and DBM is currently preparing a recommendation to take to the Board of Public Works.

---

## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Public Service Commission, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Washington County, Worcester County, Department of Legislative Services (Office of Policy Analysis, Office of Legislative Audits)

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader – March 8, 2001  
jm/cer Revised – House Third Reader – March 28, 2001

---

Analysis by: Guy G. Cherry

Direct Inquiries to:  
John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510