

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2001 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 44 (Delegate Stern)
Environmental Matters

**Food Service Facilities - Labeling of Food and Drink - Information on Allergenic
Ingredients and Food Allergies**

This bill requires that at the request of a customer, a “food service facility” must provide either verbal or written information indicating whether a specific food or drink it sells contains specified allergenic ingredients. Each food service facility is also required to post a food allergy alert poster in a conspicuous place accessible to all employees. The Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene is charged with adopting regulations to carry out the requirements of the bill.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill’s requirements could be handled with existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: Minimal.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: None.

Background: Various reports state that food allergic restaurant patrons often have difficulty obtaining correct information about food ingredients in restaurants due to inadequate labeling on food products and uninformed staff. Reports further state that restaurant staff awareness of the potential severity of food allergic reactions, and the

ability to recognize anaphylaxis and properly alert emergency response teams when such incidents arise, is lacking.

State/Local Expenditures: The cost of this legislation on government would be the cost of purchasing the necessary allergy alert posters for government-run food facilities (\$5 each), and reproducing copies of food labels for availability to customers. These costs could be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.

Small Business Effect: The cost of this legislation on food service facilities that are considered small businesses would be the cost of purchasing the necessary allergy alert posters (\$5 each), and reproducing copies of food labels for availability to customers.

Additional Information: Food allergy alert posters are available for purchase for \$5 each from the Food Allergy Alert Network.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; University System of Maryland; Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Division of Correction); Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's, Washington, and Worcester counties; Food Allergy Alert Network; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader – March 8, 2001
jm/cer

Analysis by: Sandra Steele

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