

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2001 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 655

(Delegate Nathan-Pulliam, *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

Hepatitis A, B, and C Education and Prevention

This bill requires the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to establish and promote a statewide public information program, making extensive use of mass media, on Hepatitis A, B, and C education and prevention. The Secretary is also required to establish guidelines for measuring the success of the program.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures could increase by approximately \$756,100 in FY 2002. Future year expenditures reflect annualization and inflation. Revenues would not be affected.

| (in dollars) | FY 2002 | FY 2003 | FY 2004 | FY 2005 | FY 2006 |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Revenues | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| GF Expenditure | 756,100 | 1,011,800 | 1,021,900 | 1,032,100 | 1,042,400 |
| Net Effect | (\$756,100) | (\$1,011,800) | (\$1,021,900) | (\$1,032,100) | (\$1,042,400) |

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Background: Over 5 million people in the United States are currently infected with some form of hepatitis. Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver, and is caused most often by a virus. The most common types of hepatitis are hepatitis A, B, and C. Hepatitis

A is the least serious form. A small proportion of individuals with hepatitis B develop chronic disease, in which the illness lasts longer than six months. Chronic hepatitis B and chronic hepatitis C are the most serious forms of hepatitis. Both pose risks of long-term medical complications, especially if left untreated. For the most part, people with hepatitis can infect others. Hepatitis B and C are usually spread from one person to another by direct exposure to infected blood or blood products, and needles or other sharp objects. Hepatitis B is also frequently spread through sexual contact and from mother to baby at birth, and can also be transmitted by sharing toothbrushes or nail files. Hepatitis C is rarely spread sexually, from an infected mother to her newborn, or to other members of the household. The major risk factors for acquiring hepatitis C are intravenous drug use and transfusion of blood and blood products prior to 1992. Other risk factors include tattooing, body piercing, and sharing toothbrushes or nail files. A vaccine is available to help protect people against hepatitis B, but at this time there is no available vaccine to protect against hepatitis C.

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures could increase by an estimated \$794,592 in fiscal 2002, which accounts for the bill's October 1, 2001 effective date. It includes \$750,000 in contractual services to develop the public information program, and reflects the cost of hiring an epidemiologist. It includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing expenses.

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Salaries and Fringe Benefits | \$38,467 |
| Contractual Services | 750,000 |
| Operating Expenses | <u>6,125</u> |
| Total FY 2002 State Expenditures | \$794,592 |

Future year expenditures reflect: (1) full salaries with a 6.5% increase in fiscal 2003 and a 4.5% increase each year thereafter, with a 3% employee turnover; and (2) 1% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Schering AG Corporation, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader – March 3, 2001
ncs/jr

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