

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2001 Session

FISCAL NOTE**Revised**

House Bill 1239

(Charles County Delegation)

Commerce and Government Matters

Budget and Taxation

Charles County - Fire and Rescue Services

This bill includes dive rescue and mobile intensive care units in certain provisions of law relating to fire companies and rescue squads in Charles County. The bill also modifies the fire, rescue, and emergency medical services tax levied from 16 cents per \$100 of assessed value for real property to 6.4 cents to reflect the change in property assessments for real property. The bill allows surplus funds in the Length of Service Award Program Fund to be used for recruitment and retention of volunteers. The bill also allows the Board of Fire and Rescue Commissioners to increase from \$100,000 to \$200,000 the maximum amount to be held in an emergency fund.

Fiscal Summary**State Effect:** None.

Local Effect: The bill codifies existing practice for the funding of dive rescue and mobile intensive care unit services. Changing the rate of the fire, rescue, and emergency medical services tax from 16 cents per \$100 of assessed value at 40% of assessed value for real property to 6.4 cents per \$100 of assessed value at 100% of assessed value would not change Charles County revenues. Allowing surplus funds in the Length of Service Awards Program to be used for recruitment and retention and increasing the maximum amount in an emergency fund would not directly affect Charles County finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The County Commissioners of Charles County are authorized to issue a fire and rescue tax of 16 cents per \$100 of assessed real and personal property. Proceeds from the tax are paid by the county commissioners twice a year to all fire departments and rescue squads including mobile intensive care units. Ten cents of the fire and rescue tax funds the various fire departments, 5 cents fund the various rescue squads and mobile intensive care units, and 1 cent funds the Length of Service Award Program.

Background: Charles County advises that there are currently 13 rescue squads, one mobile intensive care unit, and two dive rescue teams in the county. Dive rescue services have been in existence since the late 1980s, but were formally funded by the fire and rescue tax beginning in 1999. Mobile intensive care units began in the mid-1980s, but were funded by the fire and rescue tax beginning in 1993.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: Similar legislation was introduced in the 2000 session as HB 1285 and was referred to the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Charles County, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader – March 6, 2001
ncs/hlb Revised – Enrolled Bill – May 7, 2001

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