

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1270

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

Environmental Matters

Mental Hygiene Administration - Community Mental Health Services - Minority Populations

This bill requires the director of the Mental Hygiene Administration (MHA) to designate a liaison for minority mental health services. The liaison must provide a support system for mental health providers; advise the MHA director on administrative, funding, and other issues that may adversely impact minority health providers; and make recommendations to the MHA director on how to strengthen minority health providers' ability to offer community mental health services. The bill also requires MHA to conduct or commission a study on the relationship between substance abuse and mental illness in the African-American community and report the findings by January 1, 2003.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund revenues could increase for a one-time cost of \$25,000 to \$40,000 in FY 2003 to commission the required study. The remaining bill requirements could be handled with existing resources. Revenues would not be affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: MHA supports minority mental health systems through training sessions, workshops, and technical information to all mental health providers, including minority providers. In addition, Maryland Health Partners, which administers services for MHA,

is preparing to implement a consumer satisfaction survey on the treatment minority individuals receive through the mental health system.

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures could increase from \$25,000 to \$40,000 to commission the required study. This estimate assumes that existing MHA resources and data available from the referenced entities will be used to support the study.

MHA advises that general fund expenditures in fiscal 2003 would increase by \$146,847 to hire three additional employees (two social workers and one secretary) to support minority mental health services as required by the bill, in addition to the \$25,000 to \$40,000 one-time cost of the study. The Department of Legislative Services disagrees. Existing staff is already handling many of the bill's requirements, and a liaison could be designated from existing personnel.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

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lsc/jr

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