

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1341 (Delegate Shriver)
 Ways and Means

Education - Tuition Reimbursement - Law Enforcement Officers

This bill allows actively employed law enforcement officers to receive tuition reimbursements for courses taken towards degrees in criminal justice or related fields. Beginning in fiscal 2004, the Governor must include funding in the budget for the reimbursement of law enforcement officers' tuition costs. The funding must be comparable to the funding provided for the reimbursement of firefighter and rescue worker tuition costs. Funds provided must supplement the tuition reimbursement program and may not supplant existing funds.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures for tuition reimbursements would increase by an estimated \$892,000 annually beginning in FY 2004. Revenues would not be affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	0	892,000	892,000	892,000	892,000
Net Effect	\$0	(\$892,000)	(\$892,000)	(\$892,000)	(\$892,000)

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

Local Effect: Local expenditures for law enforcement officer tuition reimbursements could decrease.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The State Scholarship Administration must provide full and complete tuition reimbursements for active career or volunteer firefighters and ambulance or rescue

squad members who receive credit for courses towards degrees in fire service technology or emergency medical technology. Firefighters and rescue workers must be Maryland residents to qualify. Reimbursements may not exceed the cost of resident tuition rates at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Background: The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) awards tuition reimbursements to approximately 150 firefighters and rescue workers annually. MHEC advises that it has consistently awarded reimbursements to all qualified applicants. The proposed fiscal 2003 State budget includes \$372,228 for the tuition reimbursement program.

State Expenditures: Excluding federal officers, there are approximately 15,500 law enforcement officers in Maryland. If 2.5% of officers receive credits towards criminal justice degrees each year, 388 officers would be eligible for tuition reimbursements annually. MHEC estimates an average fiscal 2003 award for firefighters and rescue workers of \$2,300. Assuming a 2.5% annual participation rate among law enforcement officers and a \$2,300 average award, general fund expenditures would increase by approximately \$892,000 annually beginning in fiscal 2004.

Local Expenditures: Some local police departments offer tuition reimbursement or tuition assistance programs for officers. If the State pays full reimbursements, local expenditures for police officer tuition programs would decrease accordingly.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Higher Education Commission, Department of Legislative Services

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ncs/jr

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