

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 932

(Delegates Franchot and Hixson)

Environmental Matters

Pilot Program on Remote Emissions Sensing Devices

This bill establishes the Pilot Program on Remote Emissions Sensing Devices, administered by the Department of Transportation (MDOT), to study the effectiveness of these devices in identifying gross polluters. Under the program, three remote emissions sensing devices must be placed in Baltimore County and three in Montgomery County. MDOT will collect and analyze the data from the devices and issue a final report of its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly by November 1, 2003.

The bill is effective August 1, 2002.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund expenditures could increase substantially depending upon the methods used for the study.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: None applicable.

Background: In response to requirements of the federal Clean Air Act (CAA), Maryland has operated a vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance program in various parts of the State since 1984. Maryland's VEIP was reauthorized in 1991

through legislation requiring the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) and the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) to establish an expanded program in compliance with the 1990 Amendments to the CAA. As amended in 1990, the CAA requires all areas of the country to achieve specific air quality standards for ozone, and provides penalties for states failing to achieve the standards. Penalties include limits on new industries, loss of federal highway funds, and imposition of a federal implementation plan. Approximately 1.2 million vehicles are required to submit to the VEIP test annually.

Remote sensing is the measurement and analysis of electromagnetic radiation reflected from, transmitted through, or absorbed and scattered by the atmosphere, the hydrosphere and by material at or near the land surface. The remote sensor can capture the emissions and the license plate of specific automobiles.

The VEIP contractor is required to conduct an annual remote emissions sensing study in Baltimore City and the 13 Maryland counties that must participate in VEIP. Both Montgomery and Baltimore counties are included in the VEIP monitoring area. The VEIP contract requires 20,000 records or emissions to be collected in the VEIP area. Both MDE and MDOT agreed not to require the study in 2000, in lieu of a larger study in 2001 that involved 42,000 records. MDE is still analyzing the results of the two-week study, which cost about \$100,000.

State Fiscal Effect: The MVA advises that the study required by the bill could cost as much as \$1.5 million for a contractor to monitor emissions at six locations for six months, assuming daily monitoring is required. However, the Department of Legislative Services advises that the cost will vary according to the frequency of monitoring, which is not addressed by the bill.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of the Environment, Department of Transportation, Teledetection International, Department of Legislative Services

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