

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1004

(Delegate McHale)

Commerce and Government Matters

Maryland Security Systems Technicians Act - Security System Defined

This bill defines “security system,” under the Maryland Security Systems Technicians Act, to mean either: (1) a system used for securing a door or window, which may be a mechanical device such as a lock or dead bolt, or an electronic/electro-mechanical device operated by a key, combination, keycard, or pass code; (2) an electronic system used to sound or activate a distress call or alarm in emergency situations; or (3) a closed circuit television surveillance system.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Security systems technicians are regulated by the Licensing Division of the Department of State Police. The bill’s provisions are not expected to have a measurable impact on State operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Under the Maryland Security Systems Technicians Act (Title 18 of the Business Occupations and Professions Article), the Secretary of State Police is responsible for the licensing of security system agencies and the registration of security systems technicians. The Act does not preempt local governments from licensing or regulating security system agencies or security system users.

Background: During the 1994 session, the General Assembly created a new licensing procedure for security systems technicians under the Maryland State Police. The public had expressed many concerns regarding the access to residential homes granted to individuals involved in the security system industry. The concern was particularly acute in 1994 in light of the activities of the so-called crossbow rapist in the Washington Metropolitan area who posed as a security system consultant to gain information about and access to his victims. In 1995 the General Assembly delayed the effective date for licensure of security systems technicians until June 1, 1996. This delay allowed the security system industry and the Department of State Police to resolve technical difficulties that had arisen related to implementation.

As of June 30, 2001, 715 security system agencies/companies were licensed by the State, with a total of 5,508 registered employees. An additional 246 employees of those companies are on probationary status, awaiting clearance from the required National Criminal Records Check. In addition, another 39 agencies, with a total of 326 employees, have applied for new licenses.

All licensing and regulatory activities relating to security systems technicians are performed by the Licensing Division of the Department of State Police and are handled by the existing budgeted resources of the department. In addition to security system technician agencies and employees, the Licensing Division oversees the licensing and regulation of private detectives and agencies, security guards and agencies, special police commissions, railroad police commissions, canine registration for certified police dogs, and handgun permits.

In November 2001, the Department of Legislative Services recommended that the Legislative Policy Committee waive the Licensing and Regulation of Security Systems Technicians from full evaluation and that legislation be enacted to extend the termination date by 12 years to July 1, 2016.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: The provisions of this bill were included under HB 1368 of 2001. That bill received an unfavorable report from the House Commerce and Government Matters Committee.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of State Police, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 24, 2002
mld/cer

Analysis by: Guy G. Cherry

Direct Inquiries to:
John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510