

**Department of Legislative Services**  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2002 Session

**FISCAL NOTE**

House Bill 1035 (Delegates Nathan-Pulliam and Frush)  
 Environmental Matters

**Disease Prevention - Hepatitis A, B, and C Education and Prevention Program**

This bill requires the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to establish and promote a statewide public information program, making use of mass media, on Hepatitis A, B, and C education and prevention. The Secretary is also required to establish guidelines for measuring the success of the program.

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures could increase by \$500,000 to \$1 million annually for the public education program and \$45,500 for an employee to monitor the program beginning in FY 2003. 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	45,500	54,900	57,400	60,100	62,900
Net Effect	(\$45,500)	(\$54,900)	(\$57,400)	(\$60,100)	(\$62,900)

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

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

**Analysis**

**Background:** Over five million people in the United States are currently infected with some form of hepatitis. Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver and is caused most often by a virus. The most common types of hepatitis are hepatitis A, B, and C. Hepatitis A is

the least serious form. A small proportion of individuals with hepatitis B develop chronic disease, in which the illness lasts longer than six months. Chronic hepatitis B and chronic hepatitis C are the most serious forms of hepatitis. Both pose risks of long-term medical complications especially if left untreated. For the most part, people with hepatitis can infect others. Hepatitis B and C are usually spread from one person to another by direct exposure to infected blood or blood products, and needles or other sharp objects. Hepatitis B is also frequently spread through sexual contact and from mother to baby at birth, and can also be transmitted by sharing toothbrushes or nail files. Hepatitis C is rarely spread sexually, from an infected mother to her newborn, or to other members of the household. The major risk factors for acquiring hepatitis C are intravenous drug use and transfusion of blood and blood products prior to 1992. Other risk factors include tattooing, body piercing, and sharing toothbrushes or nail files. A vaccine is available to help protect people against hepatitis B, but at this time there is no available vaccine to protect against hepatitis C.

**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures could increase by \$500,000 to \$1 million in fiscal 2003. It includes costs for contractual services to develop and implement the mass media public information program. The cost of the mass media campaign may vary depending on the media outlets used and the frequency of the advertising. DHMH may use a combination of television, radio, and newspaper advertising as well as billboards, brochures, and posters to communicate the program's message to reduce the overall cost of the program. In addition, DHMH will need an epidemiologist to monitor and evaluate the program at a cost of \$45,500 (salary, fringe benefits, and operating expenses) in fiscal 2003, which reflects the October 1, 2002 effective date, and about \$55,000 on an annualized basis.

Future year expenditures reflect: (1) full salaries with a 3.5% annual increases and 3% employee turnover; and (2) 1% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** A similar bill, HB 655, was introduced in the Environmental Matters Committee during the 2001 session and was unfavorably reported in that committee.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Schering AG Corporation, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 8, 2002  
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