

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 966

(Delegate Finifter, *et al.*)

Commerce and Government Matters

Executive Agencies - Maryland Youth Corps - Creation

This bill creates a Maryland Youth Corps (MYC) within each department of State government, and makes provisions for its operations and funding.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Increase in general and special fund expenditures for administrative expenses associated with operation of an MYC. Potential general and special fund expenditure decrease for certain labor-intensive projects. Potential increase in federal or special fund revenues.

Local Effect: No direct impact on government operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The stated purpose of MYC is to provide a cost-effective manner for performing certain projects on public land, provide assistance in research and educational tasks on public lands, expose individuals to public service, and expand educational opportunities for certain youths.

MYC members must be between the ages of 16 and 25, and each department Secretary may establish a preference for individuals who are economically, physically, or educationally disadvantaged. Each Secretary may also enter into a contract or cooperative agreement with a qualified youth or conservation corps to perform projects.

In determining which projects MYC members are to perform, a preference is to be given to projects with long-term public benefits that are labor-intensive and assist MYC members by providing educational and other opportunities and development of a work ethic and a sense of public service. MYC members cannot replace State employees.

Each participant is to be provided a reasonable living allowance, and must agree to the term of service established by the department Secretary. Each Secretary may accept funds, services, facilities, materials or equipment to operate MYC.

Current Law: There is a Maryland Conservation Corps (MCC) within the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). MCC is for youth aged 16 to 24, and provides work experience and training on projects to maintain or enhance environmentally important lands, public works projects, natural resource projects, and assist in emergency or other situations. MCC is funded through appropriated funds, the Forest and Park Reserve Fund, and any available federal funds.

Background: MCC operates with an administrator, four administrative staff, and six crew leaders. The year-round program has approximately 50 youth members and is primarily funded by federal AmeriCorps funds. The summer program in recent years has averaged 250-300 members, with a crew leader for each 10 members. The size of the summer program depends upon the funds available, including private corporate grants and reimbursable funds. MCC receives reimbursable funds for projects conducted for other agencies, primarily the State Highway Administration. DNR advises that the MCC program receives approximately \$380,000 a year in reimbursable and private funds. The fiscal 2003 budget allowance contains \$552,900 in federal AmeriCorps funds.

State Fiscal Effect: If a State agency is able to contract with a qualified youth corps or utilize an MYC at a lower cost than a private contractor for certain labor-intensive projects, general or special fund expenditures could decline.

General and special fund expenditures would increase for the administrative expenses of operating an MYC. Each department would need at least one administrative position for an MYC, and a crew leader for each ten MYC members. Whether an MYC is year-round or summer only, and the number of MYC members, depends upon the available projects and the funding available from State, federal, and private sources. Federal and special fund revenues and expenditures may increase if a department is able to secure federal or private funds to assist in the financial support of an MYC.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Business and Economic Development, Maryland Department of the Environment, Department of Transportation, Department of Agriculture, Department of Budget and Management, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Christine A. Scott

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