

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 458 (Senator Hollinger) (Chairman, Health Subcommittee)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Environmental Matters

State Board of Examiners of Psychologists - Sunset Extension

This bill extends the sunset date for the State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (SBEP) from July 1, 2003 to July 1, 2013 and requires another sunset evaluation on or before July 1, 2012. The board is required to report to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs and the House Environmental Matters committees on or before October 1, 2002 on implementation of recommendations from the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) in its sunset evaluation of October 2001. The report must include a preliminary financial plan. A final financial plan must be submitted to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs and the House Environmental Matters committees by March 1, 2003. The financial plan must: (1) assess options, including reductions, for bringing expenditures in line with revenues; (2) identify the need for any future fee increases and an assessment of appropriate increases compared to other boards; (3) discuss maintenance of an appropriate fund balance; and (4) institute a systematic, ongoing process for long-term financial planning. The bill is effective July 1, 2002.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Special fund revenues and expenditures for this board would be maintained beyond FY 2003. The proposed FY 2003 budget assumes \$467,600 in revenues for SBEP and includes special fund expenditures of \$482,200. Out-year revenues and expenditures are expected to remain relatively constant, except for revenue fluctuations due to biennial license renewal schedules.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: SBEP is to terminate operations as of July 1, 2003.

The board is subject to the Maryland Program Evaluation Act, also known as the “Sunset Law,” which provides a system of periodic legislative review of the regulatory, licensing, and other activities of various units of State government. “Sunset review” determines the need for certain programs, services, and other governmental functions and is intended to make governmental activities responsive to the public interest.

Background: In addition to licensing psychologists and approving psychology associates, the nine-member board investigates complaints, maintains ethical and educational standards for the profession, and enforces laws and regulations through disciplinary action.

This bill arises out of the sunset evaluation of SBEP performed by DLS during 2001. In its report, DLS recommended that SBEP be continued and its termination date extended to July 1, 2013. In addition, pursuant to DLS recommendations, this bill requires SBEP to report to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs and House Environmental Matters committees on the recommendations in the report on or before October 1, 2002. The bill requires SBEP to submit a preliminary financial plan on or before October 1, 2002 and a final financial plan on or before March 1, 2003. Other DLS recommendations include:

- SBEP should work with DHMH to prepare an action plan for computerization of State licensure, a rolling application process, and acknowledgement of the Certificate of Professional Qualification in Psychology from the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards. The plan should discuss how staff will be allocated, how expenses will be met, and provide a timeline of implementation for each change; and
- SBEP should work with DHMH and other health occupations boards, as appropriate, to secure additional records storage space and adequate technical support for computing needs.

State Fiscal Effect: Special fund revenues and expenditures for SBEP will be maintained beyond fiscal 2003, because the bill proposes to continue SBEP. In fiscal 2002, the projected special fund revenue is \$561,250. For fiscal 2003, the beginning fund balance is projected to be \$212,708, and the projected revenue is \$467,650. The fiscal 2003 budget allowance for SBEP is \$482,191.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 463 (Chairman, Environmental Matters Committee) – Environmental Matters.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

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