

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2003 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Revised

Senate Bill 268 (Senator Hollinger)

(Chairman, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Health and Government Operations

**State Board of Social Work Examiners - Sunset Extension and Program
Evaluation**

This bill extends the sunset date for the Board of Social Work Examiners from July 1, 2004 to July 1, 2014 and requires another sunset evaluation on or before July 1, 2013.

The bill requires that if a licensed social work associate or licensed graduate social worker cannot be found to serve on the board within six months of the position becoming vacant, any level of licensee must be appointed immediately to fill the vacancy.

The bill permits the board to elect officers as necessary beyond the election of a chairman and secretary.

The bill also requires the board and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to report to the House Health and Government Operations Committee and the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee by October 1, 2003 on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the sunset report dated October 2002.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Special fund revenues and expenditures for this board would be maintained beyond FY 2004. The proposed FY 2004 budget assumes \$979,000 in revenues and includes \$764,000 in expenditures. 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: The Board of Social Work Examiners will expire on July 1, 2004.

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.

The State Board of Social Work Examiners regulates licensure for four distinct levels of practice for the profession:

- associate level - Licensed Social Work Associate;
- graduate level - Licensed Graduate Social Worker;
- certified level - Licensed Certified Social Worker; and
- certified-clinical level - Licensed Certified Social Worker-Clinical.

All four levels of practice require minimum and specific education, and the two advanced levels require experience and supervision. The law stipulates that all persons wishing to obtain licensure in the State must complete college or university social work programs that have been reviewed and approved by the Council of Social Work Education.

Board membership includes two consumer members and nine licensed social workers with the following stipulations:

- one licensed social work associate;
- one licensed graduate social worker;
- at least one licensed certified social worker;
- at least four licensed certified social workers-clinical; and
- one licensed social worker employed by the Department of Human Resources.

Background: This bill arises out of the sunset evaluation of the board performed by the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) during the 2002 interim. In its report, DLS

recommended that the board be continued and its termination date extended to July 1, 2014.

State Expenditures: The department indicates that continuation of the board will require additional expenditures for a planned move within the board's current building. DLS disagrees that the additional expenditures are conditioned on the extension of the board under the Maryland Program Evaluation Act.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 310 (Delegate Hurson) – Health and Government Operations.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 11, 2003
ncs/jr Revised - Senate Third Reader - March 18, 2003

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