

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2003 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1149
Ways and Means

(Delegate V. Clagett, *et al.*)

Advisory Council on Maryland's Equine Economy

This bill creates a 27-member Advisory Council on Maryland's Equine Economy to develop a strategic plan to revitalize the equine economy of Maryland to a premier national status. The advisory council is required to study various specified issues affecting the equine economy.

Council members may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations. The Department of Agriculture; with the cooperation of the Department of Business and Economic Development; the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; and the Department of Legislative Services are required to provide staff support for the council.

The advisory council must submit its findings and recommendations to the Legislative Policy Committee by December 31, 2003, and every year thereafter.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2003.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any expense reimbursements for council members could be handled with existing resources, as could any staffing requirements. Potential increase in future years for consulting services.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: None applicable.

State Fiscal Effect: The Maryland Department of Agriculture indicates that general fund expenditures would increase by approximately \$475,200 in fiscal 2004 as a result of hiring one administrative officer and one office secretary to provide staff support for the council and \$400,000 in contractual services to hire outside consultants to assist with data collection for the studies required by the bill.

The Department of Legislative Services advises that existing budgeted resources of the four agencies assigned to staff the council should be adequate to provide resources and support to the council, at least in the short term. If, in future years, existing resources prove to be inadequate to meet the needs of the council, additional expenditures may be needed for consultants. Any such increase cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Business and Economic Development, Department of Agriculture, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 18, 2003
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