

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2003 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 429 (Senator Giannetti)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Health Occupations - Morticians - Exemption and Permit

This bill states that mortician licensure requirements do not limit the State Board of Morticians from issuing permits to an authorized imam from an Islamic center or mosque to handle, transport, and work with a dead human body in performing an Islamic religious funeral service. It also requires imams who are issued permits by the board to be subject to any conditions and limitations specified in the permit.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal increase in special fund revenues due to licensure of imams as morticians.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential significant impact on Islamic cultural centers and mosques.

Analysis

Current Law: The practice of mortuary science is regulated by the board. The board issues several types of licenses, but the only permits the board issues are temporary in nature and for the purposes of teaching in continuing education courses or in response to a disaster situation. There are no provisions relating to the issuance of permits to imams.

Qualification for a mortician license requires completion of one to two years of licensed apprenticeship, attainment of certain educational requirements, passage of a national

board examination administered by the Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards of the United States, and passage of a written examination of Maryland law and regulations governing the practice of mortuary science and a practical examination demonstrating competency in embalming and sanitary science. An applicant must also be of good moral character and submit a required application and fee.

State Fiscal Effect: The fiscal effect of this bill cannot be reliably quantified, but is not expected to be significant. For illustrative purposes only, if ten imams sought licensure by the board, special fund revenues would increase by \$4,500 in fiscal 2004 and even-numbered out-years due to the biennial licensure cycle.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

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