

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2004 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 821 (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 permits issued to imams. Special fund expenditures as a result of this bill are expected to be minimal and absorbable within existing resources.

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.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: An identical bill was introduced as SB 429 in the 2003 session and received an unfavorable report in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 8, 2004
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