

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 533 (Chairman, Judiciary Committee)
(By Request – Departmental – State Police)

Judiciary

Judicial Proceedings

State Police - Cease Fire Council - Transfer to the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention

The departmental bill transfers the Cease Fire Council from the Department of State Police to the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP). GOCCP is required to provide staff to the council, and the Assistant Attorney General for GOCCP is assigned as the legal advisor to the council.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill codifies existing practice. Chapter 429 of 2004 (budget bill for FY 2005) shifted the council from the budget and control of the State Police to GOCCP. Administration of these operations will continue to be handled with the existing budgeted resources of GOCCP.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: The Department of State Police has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 2 of 2000 established the Cease Fire Council within the Department of State Police. The Secretary of State Police chairs the 11-member council.

A member of the council may not receive compensation as a member of the council, but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations, as provided in the State budget. The Department of State Police provides staff support for the council. The Assistant Attorney General assigned to the Department of State Police is the legal advisor to the council.

The council administers the Cease Fire Council Grant Program to support “innovative and collaborative initiatives” to reduce firearms violence. The program is required to be funded as provided in the State budget and program expenditures may only be made in accordance with the State budget or by budget amendment. Grants made by the council are now called STOP Gun Violence Grants.

When making grants, the council must consider and give priority to: (1) comprehensive and coordinated law enforcement and prosecution programs that target criminals and juveniles who use or illegally possess firearms; (2) law enforcement and prosecution salaries and overtime in support of firearm violence reduction programs; (3) covert firearms-related investigations and debriefing of criminal and juvenile arrestees and offenders for information related to illegal firearms trafficking; (4) initiatives that support the tracing of firearms used to commit crimes or delinquent acts and the identification of illegal firearms traffickers; (5) purchases of technology and information systems to support firearm violence reduction initiatives; and (6) other efforts that aid in apprehending and prosecuting criminals or apprehending and filing a complaint against juveniles who use or illegally possess firearms.

The council is specifically required to: (1) make grants; (2) establish or assist in the establishment of programs designed to reduce the incidence of firearms violence related crime and encourage participation in existing programs with these objectives; (3) identify specific goals, objectives, and methodologies to be used in support of programs eligible for funding; (4) identify priorities for firearms violence related crime prevention strategies in the State; and (5) develop criteria to evaluate the outcomes of programs that receive money under the program.

State Fiscal Effect: The Governor’s fiscal 2006 budget allowance for the STOP Gun Violence Grants made by the council is \$955,500. The appropriation for fiscal 2005 was the same amount.

Additional Comments: The Governor’s fiscal 2006 budget allowance anticipates a grant of \$75,170 from the council to the State Police. The grant to the State Police from the council in fiscal 2005 was \$73,789.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of State Police, Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 9, 2005
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