

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 1434

(Delegates Carter and Oaks)

Environmental Matters and
Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Education - Baltimore City Public School Buildings - Drinking Water

This bill requires the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners to ensure that the drinking water in each Baltimore City public school is safe from lead in accordance with federal standards and otherwise meets State drinking water standards by December 31, 2005.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2005.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: None. Baltimore City has a program to address unsafe drinking water that complies with the bill's requirements.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: On receipt of information that a dangerous contaminant is present in a public water system, the Secretary of the Environment may take any action necessary to protect the health of the individuals whose health is endangered. The Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS) has a program to ensure safe drinking water, and the program has been approved by the Baltimore City Health Department.

Background: Several years ago, lead was discovered in the drinking water at many BCPSS schools. Initially, all drinking fountains were turned off and bottled water was distributed to every school. BCPSS now has a program for testing and reactivating water fountains once contaminants have been removed. Bottled water is still provided in schools that have not undergone the necessary repairs and replacements. BCPSS advises that it is spending approximately \$700,000 in fiscal 2005 to provide bottled water in schools where the water fountains do not meet the proper standards. When bottled water was being supplied to all BCPSS schools, expenditures were approximately \$1 million annually.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education, Baltimore City, Baltimore City Public School System, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 21, 2005
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