

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 840 (Delegate Jennings)
Environmental Matters

Agriculture - Infectious and Contagious Diseases - Notice of Quarantine

This bill requires, in cases of a quarantine order, the Secretary of Agriculture to post a suitable sign or notice on the premises on which the quarantined animal is located. The sign must remain posted for the duration of the quarantine and must be located in a conspicuous place on the premises. The required sign must designate: (1) the location of the quarantined animal; (2) the disease or diseases present on the premises; and (3) the type and number of livestock or poultry affected.

The bill also requires the owner of the affected property to provide timely and readable notice of the quarantine to any employee or agent of any agricultural organization or business entity that may enter the property.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill would directly affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: The Secretary of Agriculture is responsible for protecting the health of the State's domestic animals from infectious and contagious diseases. The Secretary is authorized to adopt and enforce quarantine, sanitary, or other rules and regulation necessary. The Secretary is authorized to establish, maintain, and enforce a quarantine order if it is determined urgent and necessary for the prompt performance of

protecting the State's domestic animals. Animal industries make up a large portion of the State's \$1 billion agriculture industry. Animal diseases can adversely affect the involved businesses and the agriculture industry as a whole.

Chapter 358 of 2005 requires the Secretary of Agriculture to maintain all animal health diagnostic or analytical reports and reports filed under an animal health program established by the Secretary in a manner that protects the identity of the animal owner. This requirement does not, however, prevent the Secretary, after consulting with the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, from disclosing specified identifying information if necessary to protect the public health or prevent the spread of infectious or contagious animal diseases.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; Maryland Department of Agriculture; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 27, 2006
nas/ljm

Analysis by: Michael Sanelli

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510