

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1448
Ways and Means

(Delegate Heller, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs

Education - Scoliosis Screening in Public Schools - Repeal

This bill repeals the requirement that public and private schools screen students for scoliosis.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Eliminating scoliosis screenings would not materially impact local school system finances.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: In conjunction with the county health department, each public school system must provide scoliosis screening tests to students at least once between sixth and eighth grades. Private schools are also required to conduct the screenings.

Background: Scoliosis is an abnormal curvature of the spine that afflicts approximately 3 to 5 of every 1,000 children. A screening for scoliosis can be done through a visual exam. A child must take off his or her shirt (a girl can leave her bra on) and bend forward. In a child with scoliosis, the examiner may notice imbalances in the child's rib cage, shoulders, or pelvis.

The primary age of onset for scoliosis is 10 to 15, and the purpose of testing children in schools is to identify problems early. In rare cases, scoliosis may require a brace to prevent the curvature from getting worse or, even more rarely, surgery to improve the problem.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 865 (Senator Britt) – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 14, 2006
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