

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1739
Economic Matters

(Delegate Moe)

Statewide Blue Ribbon Commission on Base Realignment and Closures

This bill creates a Blue Ribbon Commission on Base Realignment and Closures (BRAC) and requires the commission to study the local impact of BRAC on various issues, including government, schools, affordable housing, and transportation. The commission must meet three times annually.

The Department of Legislative Services is to provide staffing for the commission. The bill also permits the commission to request liaisons from specified organizations to assist in carrying out its mission.

The commission must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by June 1 and December 1 of each year.

The bill takes effect October 1, 2006 and terminates June 30, 2012.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. Any expense reimbursements for commission members and staffing costs are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: The bill would not directly affect local government finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: In 1990 Congress created a process known as BRAC to address an excess capacity of military facilities. BRAC allows for the appointment of an independent commission that evaluates the military's needs and offers recommendations. The 2005 BRAC represents the first major base closure and realignment activity in 10 years.

Chapter 335 of 2003 established the 19-member Military Installation Strategic Planning Council to examine issues related to the expansion of military installations. The council was charged with identifying:

- public infrastructure and other community support necessary to improve mission efficiencies and develop existing installations in the State;
- existing and potential impacts of encroachment on military installations in Maryland;
- potential State and community actions that could minimize the impacts of encroachment and enhance the long-term potential of military installations; and
- opportunities for collaboration among military contractors, academic institutions, local governments, the State, and military departments.

The council was also charged with reviewing State policies to identify actions needed to prepare for the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) Facilities Initiative that began in 2005 and researching how jurisdictions have addressed encroachment and partnership formation issues. Chapter 240 of 2005 extended the termination date of the council until December 31, 2007.

Chapter 315 of 2004 requires the Secretary of Business and Economic Development to designate an entity within the Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) as the single contact for issues relating to realignment and closure of federal military installations in the State. The council serves as that point of contact.

Background: The BRAC commission finished its work and submitted its recommendations to the President on September 8, 2005. The recommendations were subsequently submitted to the U.S. Congress and took effect November 9, 2005.

In total, Maryland gained approximately 17,000 DOD military and civilian jobs, which will be phased in over a five- to six-year period. With the bulk of the gains at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Fort Meade, and the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, most of these jobs are projected to be medical professionals, engineers, and management positions. According to DBED, the total number of new jobs could exceed

40,000, many of which could go to existing Maryland residents. In addition to new jobs, new residents could approach 50,000 individuals, concentrated primarily in Harford, Anne Arundel, and Montgomery counties.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Business and Economic Development,
Department of Legislative Services

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