

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 570
Finance

(Senator Stoltzfus)

Lodging Establishments - Individuals with Disabilities - Reservation of Rooms to Facilitate Emergency Rescue

This bill requires lodging establishments with 50 or more guest rooms to reserve an accessible room on the lowest floor of the building for guests with disabilities unless all other rooms are occupied. Front desk staff must offer an available accessible room on the lowest floor of the building to an individual with a disability before offering rooms on other floors.

Lodging establishments with 50 or more guest rooms must also establish an emergency rescue procedure for individuals with disabilities and train personnel in appropriate evacuation procedures.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect State finances or operations.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect local finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) generally requires hotels and other places of transient lodging to provide one accessible room per 25 guest rooms or portion thereof. In addition, an establishment must generally provide a certain number of

rooms for persons with hearing impairments. Establishments with more than 50 rooms are also required to equip a certain number of accessible rooms with roll-in showers.

Accessible rooms must include choice among the features provided to other guests, including choices in size, price, amenities, and number of beds. ADA requires all new facilities, including hotels, to provide areas of rescue assistance on any level of the building that does not provide an accessible egress route.

These provisions do not apply to establishments located within a building that contains fewer than six rooms for rent and is occupied by the proprietor as his or her residence.

Small Business Effect: The bill applies only to establishments with 50 or more rooms for guests. It is assumed that the majority of establishments with this number of rooms would not qualify as small businesses. To the extent that an establishment with 50 or more rooms qualifies as a small business, the owner could realize additional expenditures for establishment of an emergency rescue procedure and training of personnel.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Disabilities; Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; U.S. Department of Justice; Department of Legislative Services

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mam/ljm

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