

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Revised

House Bill 891

(Delegate Myers, *et al.*)

Health and Government Operations

Finance

Postmortem Examiners Commission - Rate for the Transportation of a Body

This bill requires the State budget appropriation to carry out the Postmortem Examiners Commission duties to include a payment at a rate of five times the State mileage reimbursement rate per mile for the transportation of a body from the scene of death to a designated location. It repeals the provision requiring the budget appropriation to include the necessary expenses for transportation of a body for examination by a medical examiner.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2007.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures would increase by \$108,200 in FY 2008 for the increased body transportation payment rate. Future years reflect inflation. No effect on revenues.

(in dollars)	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	108,200	115,300	123,000	131,100	139,700
Net Effect	(\$108,200)	(\$115,300)	(\$123,000)	(\$131,100)	(\$139,700)

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Increase in revenues for any small businesses providing this body transportation service that would be paid a higher transportation rate.

Analysis

Current Law: The State budget must include an appropriation to carry out the Postmortem Examiners Commission duties including provisions for • the fee for an authorized pathologist; • the necessary expenses for transporting a body for examination by a medical examiner or for autopsy; and • for a homicide victim, the necessary expenses for transporting the body from the autopsy site or examination to a location within the State specified by the victim's family.

Background: The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Office of the Chief Medical Examiner's (OCME) budget includes general funds to pay body transportation costs. In calendar 2006, OCME conducted 4,323 autopsy examinations. For 2,984 of those autopsy examinations, OCME paid body transportation costs. In Baltimore City, OCME has forensic investigators on duty who go to the scene of an individual's death, take custody of the body, and transport the body to OCME. In the State's other jurisdictions, funeral homes or body transportation providers are called to transport the body from the scene of the individual's death to OCME.

The State mileage reimbursement rate has increased by an average annual rate of 6.6% since fiscal 2000. The mileage reimbursement rate increased from 30 cents per mile in fiscal 2000 to 48.5 cents per mile in fiscal 2007. In three fiscal years, (fiscal 2000, 2004, and 2005) the mileage reimbursement rate did not increase. In fiscal 2006, the mileage reimbursement rate increased by 30.9%, from 34 cents per mile to 44.5 cents per mile. The current mileage reimbursement rate is 48.5 cents per mile.

State Expenditures: The Governor's proposed fiscal 2008 budget for OCME includes \$369,307 in general funds for body transportation services, which assumes a \$2.00 per mile transportation rate. Raising the rate to \$2.59 per mile (five times the State's projected fiscal 2008 mileage reimbursement rate of 51.7 cents per mile), a 29.3% increase, would increase general fund expenditures by \$108,207 in fiscal 2008.

Future year expenditures reflect a 6.6% annual increase in the State mileage reimbursement rate.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 2, 2007
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Analysis by: Lisa A. Daigle

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