

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2007 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 567  
Judiciary

(Anne Arundel County Delegation)

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**City of Annapolis - Drug-Free Zones - Community or Recreation Centers**

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This bill establishes drug-free zones around community or recreation centers in the City of Annapolis by prohibiting a person from manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, or possessing with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance (or to conspire to commit any of these crimes) within 1,000 feet of a “community or recreation center” in the city.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Potential minimal increase in general fund expenditures due to the bill’s incarceration penalty provisions.

**Local Effect:** Potential minimal increase in revenues for Anne Arundel County due to the bill’s monetary penalty provisions and because these cases would be heard in the 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court. It is assumed that signage costs could be absorbed within existing budgeted resources of the City of Annapolis.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** The bill’s prohibitions apply only to the City of Annapolis. A violator is guilty of a felony and subject to the following maximum penalties: • for a first offense, a fine of \$20,000 and/or imprisonment for 20 years; and • for each subsequent offense, a fine of \$40,000 and/or imprisonment for 40 years. Sentences imposed under these provisions are required to be served consecutively to any other sentence imposed, and a

conviction under these provisions may not merge with a conviction for other specified drug-related prohibitions.

The bill provides for the approval and evidentiary use of maps to define the location and boundaries of the covered areas for prosecutorial purposes. The bill's provisions do not preclude the prosecution from introducing other evidence to establish an element of a crime and do not preclude the use or admissibility of maps or diagrams other than those approved by the Mayor and City Council of Annapolis.

The City of Annapolis may post signs designating these areas as "drug-free zones." Such signs must be designed to provide notice of the provisions of this bill.

**Current Law:** A person is prohibited from manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, or possessing with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance within 1,000 feet of any school or on a school vehicle. A violator is guilty of a felony and subject to the following maximum penalties: • for a first offense, a fine of \$20,000 and/or imprisonment for 20 years; and • for each subsequent offense, a fine of \$40,000 and/or imprisonment for 40 years and not less than 5 years. The mandatory minimum five-year sentence for a subsequent offense is nonsuspendable and nonparolable. Sentences imposed under these provisions are required to be served consecutively to any other sentence imposed, and a conviction under these provisions may not merge with a conviction for other specified drug-related prohibitions.

A county board of education is authorized to adopt regulations requiring the posting of signs designating the areas within 1,000 feet of schools as "drug-free school zones."

**State Expenditures:** The extent to which the manufacture and distribution of illicit drugs is within 1,000 feet of a community or recreation center in Annapolis is not known. Likewise, the extent to which the bill's mandatory consecutive sentencing and its prohibition against merging convictions could increase actual sentences cannot be reliably estimated. The underlying activities covered under this bill are already criminal offenses, statewide.

In any event, this bill could lead to an increase in arrests and convictions, at least initially, for the covered offenses in Annapolis depending on changes in enforcement practices. Accordingly, it is possible that general fund expenditures could increase as a result of incarceration penalties due to more people being committed to the Division of Correction (DOC) facilities for longer periods of time. The bill's criminal penalties, as enhancements to the existing criminal penalties for the underlying crimes, increase the likelihood that the conviction for these offenses would lead to increased incarceration time in a State facility.

Persons serving a sentence longer than 18 months are incarcerated in DOC facilities. Currently, the average total cost per inmate, including overhead, is estimated at \$2,300 per month. This bill alone, however, should not create the need for additional beds, personnel, or facilities. Excluding overhead, the average cost of housing a new DOC inmate (including medical care and variable costs) is \$465 per month. Excluding medical care, the average variable costs total \$134 per month.

Persons serving a sentence of one year or less in a jurisdiction other than Baltimore City are sentenced to local detention facilities. For persons sentenced to a term of between 12 and 18 months, the sentencing judge has the discretion to order that the sentence be served at a local facility or DOC. The State reimburses counties for part of their incarceration costs, on a per diem basis, after a person has served 90 days. State per diem reimbursements for fiscal 2008 are estimated to range from \$21 to \$65 per inmate depending upon the jurisdiction. Persons sentenced to such a term in Baltimore City are generally incarcerated in DOC facilities. The Baltimore City Detention Center, a State-operated facility, is used primarily for pretrial detentions.

**Local Revenue:** Revenues could increase minimally as a result of the bill's monetary penalty provisions from cases heard in the 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** HB 69 of 2006, as amended, would have applied similar provisions statewide. HB 69 passed the House, was referred to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, and received no further action.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** City of Annapolis, Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 2, 2007  
mll/hlb

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