

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 792

(Senator Lenett)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Environmental Matters

**Residential Real Property - Maryland Building Performance Standards -
Minimum Standards for Visitability - Study**

This bill requires the Department of Housing and Community Development to study minimum visitability standards of newly constructed single-family residences to increase accessibility for mobility-limited individuals.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2008 and terminates May 31, 2009.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. DHCD could handle the study requirements within existing budgeted resources. Revenues would not be affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: DHCD is required to study whether: • it is advisable to adopt, as a modification of the Maryland Building Performance Standards, minimum visitability standards for the design and construction of new single-family residences; • to include exemption provisions for homebuilders; and • the standards should include requirements for entrances, exits, doorways, hallways, passageways, and bathrooms. In conducting the study, DHCD is required to solicit the views of representatives from local governments, architects, homebuilders, realtors, individuals with disabilities, and senior citizens.

DHCD has to determine whether to adopt minimum visitability standards and report its findings and recommendations to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Environmental Matters Committee by December 31, 2008.

Current Law: DHCD is required to adopt as the MBPS the most recent version of the IBC. Within 12 months of the release of each new version of the IBC, DHCD is required to review the new version and consider modifications. During this process, DHCD is required to accept and consider comments and hold a public hearing on any proposed modification. DHCD is prohibited from adopting any modification that is more stringent than the IBC.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 448 (Delegate Niemann, *et al.*) – Environmental Matters.

Information Source(s): Department of Housing and Community Development,
Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 10, 2008
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