

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 7

(Senator Astle)

Finance

Environmental Matters

Task Force to Study the Boating Industry in Maryland

This bill extends the termination date of the Task Force to Study the Boating Industry in Maryland from July 31, 2008 to June 30, 2009. In addition, it extends the final reporting deadline from June 30, 2008 to December 31, 2008.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2008.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any expense reimbursements for task force members and staffing costs for the Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 523 of 2007 established the Task Force to Study the Boating Industry in Maryland. The task force is charged with:

- evaluating incentives to encourage large boats and yachts to use marinas and boatyards for recreation, repair, and outfitting within the State;
- determining ways to encourage and promote tourism throughout State waters;

- researching the economic impact that marine industries and recreational boaters contribute to the State's economy; and
- identifying barriers that limit the State's competitiveness with other states regarding the boating industry and developing methods to overcome those barriers.

Chapter 523 required the task force to submit a preliminary report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and specified committees of the General Assembly by November 30, 2007. A final report is due by June 30, 2008. DBED and DNR are required to provide staff for the task force.

Background: In a November 5, 2007 letter to the Governor and the Presiding Officers, Senator Astle, the task force chairman, noted that the task force held its first meeting in October. The letter, which is also the preliminary report required by Chapter 523, indicated that due to the late appointment of the task force members, the time commitments associated with the 2007 special session, and the expansive charge of the task force, the task force needs additional time to complete its work. The letter noted that legislation would be introduced to extend the final reporting deadline.

At a January 4, 2008 meeting, the task force identified three goals: (1) identify a marketing agenda directed at out-of-state boaters; (2) provide the best environment for growth and expansion of the marine industry; and (3) identify factors that promote and maintain water access for boaters and the boating industry. Three subcommittees were established and tasks were identified for each. The subcommittees plan to meet during the 2008 session, and the task force plans to reconvene at the end of April.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 17 (Delegate Sossi) – Environmental Matters.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 10, 2008
ncs/jr

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