

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 228

(Chair, Environmental Matters Committee)  
(By Request – Departmental – Agriculture)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental  
Affairs

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State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners - Hospital Inspections

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This departmental bill requires the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners to inspect every veterinary hospital facility in the State at least once every *two* years, instead of at least once a year.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** The bill would not materially affect State finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** The Maryland Department of Agriculture has determined that the bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** SBVME must inspect every veterinary hospital facility in the State at least once a year.

SBVME is established within MDA and is made up of seven members appointed by the Governor, five of whom must be licensed and registered veterinarians in the State. The board is responsible for licensing and inspecting veterinary hospitals, licensing and registering veterinarians, and registering veterinary technicians, among other duties.

**Background:** MDA advises that inspecting each veterinary hospital annually has become increasingly more difficult as the number of veterinary hospitals has increased. SBVME currently has less than one full-time position devoted to inspecting veterinary hospitals (with one vacant inspector position that was previously shared with the Maryland Horse Industry Board). In fiscal 2007, 470 of 512 veterinary hospitals were inspected, and SBVME indicates that only about 2% of veterinary hospitals fail inspections each year. SBVME believes that because the vast majority of hospitals meet sanitation requirements, more emphasis should be placed on bringing those hospitals that have failed inspection into compliance.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Agriculture, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 1, 2008  
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