

**Department of Legislative Services**  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2008 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 539 (Delegate Robinson, *et al.*)  
 Health and Government Operations

**Task Force to Study the Impact of Sleep Apnea on Children**

This bill establishes a Task Force to Study the Impact of Sleep Apnea on Children, staffed by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Maryland State Department of Education. The task force has to • study the impact of obesity and disruptive sleep disorders on children aged one through eight; • establish programs to educate health care professionals, teachers, and parents on the signs and symptoms of sleep apnea; • develop a screening tool or questionnaire for pediatric obstructive sleep apnea; • implement a screening program for pediatric obstructive sleep apnea; and • develop mechanisms for referring children with possible obstructive sleep apnea to appropriate health care providers. The task force must report its findings to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2009.

The bill takes effect October 1, 2008 and terminates March 31, 2010.

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures could increase by \$250,000 in FY 2009 related to a grant from DHMH to MedChi to develop and implement the screening program and conduct the required education. All other task force expenses for task force members are assumed to be minimal and absorbable with existing resources. DHMH and MSDE should be able to provide staffing with existing resources.

(in dollars)	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	250,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$250,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

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

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## **Analysis**

**Current Law:** Maryland law does not specifically address sleep apnea in children.

**Background:** Sleep apnea is a breathing disorder that occurs when a sleeping person's breathing pauses. A person with sleep apnea often snores between episodes when his or her breathing pauses. Sleep apnea can also be related to an irregular heartbeat, high blood pressure, heart attack, and stroke.

According to the Mayo Clinic, obstructive sleep apnea syndrome is the most common type of apnea in children and usually occurs between the ages of three and six. The most common cause at that age is enlarged tonsils and adenoids. DHMH indicates that prevalence in children is highly debated in the literature and varies from 1% to 15% of all children.

**State Fiscal Effect:** General fund expenditures could increase by \$250,000 in fiscal 2009 due to DHMH providing MedChi with a grant to develop and implement a pediatric obstructive sleep apnea screening program. DHMH advises that MedChi is the only appropriate entity to develop and implement such a program and that the funding level is based on similar projects granted to MedChi in the past. The \$250,000 would be a one-time only grant to MedChi, which would continue program implementation only until the bill's March 31, 2010 termination date.

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## **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 22, 2008  
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