

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 433 (Delegate Malone)
Environmental Matters

Baltimore County - Emergency Vehicles - Sirens

This bill requires a Baltimore County emergency vehicle with a gross vehicle weight of at least 47,000 pounds to be equipped with a motor-driven mechanical siren that emits a minimum of 123 decibels of a square wave warning sound.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Baltimore County expenditures increase by \$5,800 in FY 2010 for the purchase of two sirens to comply with the bill. Additional future year expenditures for higher maintenance costs associated with mechanical sirens. Revenues are not affected. **This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: All emergency vehicles must be equipped with a siren, exhaust whistle, or bell capable of giving an audible signal under normal conditions from a distance of at least 500 feet.

Baltimore County has over 50 emergency vehicles with a gross vehicle weight over 47,000 pounds; two of them have electronic sirens.

Local Expenditures: Baltimore County advises that each year about 20% of mechanical sirens on emergency vehicles require maintenance at a cost about

\$3,700, which does not include the cost to repair ancillary damage caused by faulty mechanical sirens. Further, Baltimore County advises that its current practice has been to replace mechanical sirens with electronic sirens, which typically last longer with fewer maintenance needs. Thus, over the long term, by not proceeding with the gradual switch to electronic sirens under the current procurement plan, Baltimore County maintenance expenditures may increase.

In fiscal 2010, Baltimore County must purchase two additional mechanical sirens to replace the electronic sirens on two vehicles at a total cost of about \$5,804.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore County, Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 13, 2009
mlm/ljm

Analysis by: Evan M. Isaacson

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510