

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 3 (Senator Astle)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Public Safety - County or Municipal Corporation Funded Ambulance Service -
Physician's Office Adjacent to Hospital**

This bill prohibits an emergency medical service funded by a county or municipal corporation from providing ambulance service to transport a patient from a physician's office to a hospital located immediately adjacent to or within 250 yards of the physician's office.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not directly affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: Potential minimal decrease in revenues beginning in FY 2010 for jurisdictions that bill for ambulance service. Potential minimal decrease in expenditures for ambulance service beginning in FY 2010 for all jurisdictions that currently respond to calls prohibited under the bill.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: There are 24 jurisdictional emergency medical services (EMS) operational programs in Maryland that receive local funds. They include all 23 Maryland counties and Baltimore City. Additionally, Annapolis City EMS receives funds from Annapolis City, and volunteer fire/EMS companies receive some funding from local jurisdictions. Some jurisdictions also levy a fire tax to support fire/EMS operations.

Many Maryland jurisdictions, including some volunteer companies, bill for ambulance service. The amount billed depends on the severity of the call and can range from approximately \$200 to more than \$500, with additional mileage charges in some jurisdictions. Medicaid currently pays \$125 for ambulance transport.

Local Fiscal Effect: To the extent that services prohibited under the bill would have been billable services, local revenues from ambulance billing decrease beginning in fiscal 2010. Larger jurisdictions such as Baltimore City may take as many as 100 to 250 calls per year that are prohibited under the bill. *For illustrative purposes only*, at a charge of \$250, this results in lost revenues of \$25,000 to \$62,500 annually. Actual revenue losses depend on the number and severity of calls and the payor mix of the individuals that would have been transported in the absence of the bill.

All jurisdictions that currently respond to calls prohibited under the bill experience a minimal decrease in expenditures for ambulance services beginning in fiscal 2010. Actual savings depends on the number and severity of calls that would have been made in the absence of the bill.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Calvert, Caroline, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties; cities of Annapolis, Bowie, and Takoma Park; Baltimore City; Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems; Department of Legislative Services

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mcp/mwc

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