

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 955 (Delegate V. Clagett)
Environmental Matters

Finance

Maryland Horse Industry Board - Equine Activities

This bill clarifies the various types of equine-related activities that fall under the regulatory authority of the Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB) and specifies what activities are not subject to regulation by MHIB. The bill also requires that equine activities be treated as agricultural activities for provisions of State law relating to MHIB.

Fiscal Summary

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

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary: Equine activities, as defined by the bill, include teaching equestrian skills; participating in equestrian competitions, exhibitions, or other displays of equestrian skills; and caring for, breeding, boarding, renting, riding, or training horses.

The bill specifies that horse racing and standardbred stables or farms using horses for working or cultivating the soil or herding or cutting livestock are not subject to regulation by MHIB.

Current Law: The operation of a horse riding or rental stable without a license from MHIB is prohibited. MHIB issues licenses, inspects, and has related enforcement authority over horse stables in Maryland. Regulations specify the following four classes of license:

- boarding – an establishment that stables five or more horses and receives compensation for these services;
- sales – an establishment that sells five or more horses a year;
- rental – an establishment that lets for hire one or more horses to be ridden or driven and for which instruction is not given; and
- instruction – an establishment that lets for hire one or more horses to be ridden or driven and for which instruction is given.

Horse riding and rental stables are defined in statute as including boarding stables, equine dealer, breeding stables or rescue stables, and sales barns.

However, horse racing and standardbred stables and farms using horses for agricultural purposes are excluded from regulation by MHIB.

Background: MHIB has licensed and inspected horse stables in the State for more than 40 years. In addition, the board has a broad mission related to serving as an information resource about, supporting research on, and promoting the equine industry in Maryland. MHIB has six statutorily defined duties: (1) carry out the licensing, inspection, and related enforcement of horse stables in the State; (2) advise the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) regarding matters affecting the horse industry in the State; (3) support research on equine health and related issues; (4) promote the development and use of horses in the State; (5) create public awareness of the value of equine activities as they relate to the preservation of green space and agricultural land; and (6) develop and disseminate information concerning the equine industry, including the history and tradition of breeding and the role of horses in recreation activities.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Agriculture; Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 3, 2009
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