

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2009 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Revised**

Senate Bill 817

(Senator Jones)

Judicial Proceedings

Judiciary

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**Task Force to Study Prison Violence in Maryland - Reconstitution**

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This bill reconstitutes the Task Force to Study Prison Violence in Maryland. An interim report to the Governor and the General Assembly is required by December 31, 2009 and a final report of findings and recommendations is required by December 31, 2010. The bill also states that it is the intent of the General Assembly that the same persons be appointed to the reconstituted task force.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2009 and terminates on May 31, 2011.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Any continuing expense reimbursements for task force members are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Background:** The 2005 *Joint Chairmen's Report* required the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) to report quarterly, beginning July 1, 2005, on inmate assaults for the correctional and detention facilities. DPSCS developed and instituted the use of new software – the Facility Incident Reporting Manager (FIRM) – designed to collect assault data and eliminate some of the human error variations in the collection method used prior to July 1, 2004.

Chapter 518 of 2007 created the Task Force to Study Prison Violence in Maryland to evaluate available information on (1) the scope, nature, patterns, and causal relationships of violence in the State's prisons; (2) the impact of illegal drugs on violence in the State's prisons; (3) the impact of exposure to lead and other pollutants on violence in the State's prisons; (4) the best practices of other state correctional systems in dealing with prison violence; (5) the impact of contraband on violence in the State's prisons; (6) the role of gang activity on violence in the State's prisons; and (7) other issues that the task force considers relevant.

DPSCS provides staffing to the task force. An interim report was made to the Governor and the General Assembly in December 2007. A final report of the findings and recommendations of the task force was due by December 31, 2008. The most recent meeting of the task force was held on July 16, 2008. A final report of findings and recommendations has not yet been made.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services,  
Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 16, 2009  
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