

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 1092 (Senator Rosapepe, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
 and Finance

Snowstorm and Related Climate Change Preparation Act

This bill requires the Maryland Commission on Climate Change, in cooperation with the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), to submit a joint report to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 1, 2010, on the investments necessary for the State to respond effectively to weather emergencies. Based on that report, the bill expresses the General Assembly's intent that the Governor (1) direct a request to the President of the United States and the Maryland Congressional Delegation to provide specified federal funds to the State and local governments to prepare for future weather emergencies in the State; and (2) appropriate sufficient fiscal 2012 funds to support the investments necessary to prepare for future weather emergencies in the State.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2010.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures increase by \$225,000 in FY 2011 for contractual services associated with completing a study and conducting associated public outreach and meetings in order to prepare the required report. Potential significant increase in general fund expenditures in FY 2012 due to the bill's intent language relating to appropriating sufficient FY 2012 funds to support investments to prepare for future weather emergencies. Potential increase in federal fund revenues due to the bill's intent language relating to requesting specified federal funds.

| (in dollars) | FY 2011 | FY 2012 | FY 2013 | FY 2014 | FY 2015 |
|----------------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| FF Revenue | - | - | - | - | - |
| GF Expenditure | \$0 | - | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| SF Expenditure | \$225,000 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Net Effect | (\$225,000) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |

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

Local Effect: The bill expresses legislative intent that, based on the report submitted pursuant to the bill, the Governor request that specified federal funds be provided to local governments to prepare for future weather emergencies in the State. To the extent this results in an increase in federal funds, local governments benefit.

Small Business Effect: No direct effect. The extent to which any additional federal or State funding for weather emergency preparedness activities affects small businesses is unknown.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The report must identify (1) the economic and other costs to the residents of the State of severe weather during the winter of 2010; and (2) the investments that the State should make to prepare for future weather emergencies, including snow, hurricanes, drought, flooding, and other weather emergencies that may occur as a result of climate change.

Current Law/Background: The State of Maryland received a record level of snow over the past four months. In December 2009, a storm left upwards of 20 inches of snow on much of the State. In early February 2010, two storms left as much as 50 inches of snow in some parts of the State. On February 5, 2010, the Governor issued a Declaration of Emergency in response to one of the storms, which effectively authorized the State to activate the Maryland National Guard and provide assistance to local emergency managers.

In Maryland, the Coordinated Highways Action Response Team (CHART) program was developed as a joint effort between MDOT, the Maryland Transportation Authority, and the Maryland State Police, in cooperation with other federal, State, and local agencies. CHART's mission is to improve operations of Maryland's highway system by using real-time mapping technology to improve response time and to mitigate nonrecurring congestion, which accounts for approximately half of the State's highway traffic congestion. In fiscal 2009, CHART personnel responded to over 15,000 incidents and assisted more than 17,000 stranded motorists on Maryland roads.

MEMA, which is part of the Maryland Military Department, is responsible for coordinating the State response in any major emergency or disaster. This includes supporting local governments as needed or requested, and coordinating assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other federal partners. MEMA manages many of the federal grants that fund a broad range of initiatives leading to enhanced protection from and responses to the full range of natural and man-made disasters which could threaten the State's citizens.

In 2007 Governor O'Malley issued an executive order establishing the Maryland Commission on Climate Change to develop a plan of action to address climate change and to prepare for the likely consequences and impacts of climate change. The commission is staffed by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the Department of Natural Resources. In January 2008, the commission released an interim report. In August 2008 the commission issued its Climate Action Plan, which includes a comprehensive assessment of climate change impacts in Maryland and a review and assessment of the costs of inaction. The plan recommended the adoption of goals to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 10% by 2012; 15% by 2015; 25% to 50% by 2020; and 90% by 2050 (from 2006 levels). The plan also includes a comprehensive strategy for reducing Maryland's vulnerability to climate change. Chapters 171 and 172 of 2009 require the State to develop plans, adopt regulations, and implement programs to reduce GHG emissions by 25% from 2006 levels by 2020.

State Expenditures: TTF expenditures increase by \$225,000 in fiscal 2011 for contractual costs associated with completing a study and conducting associated public outreach and meetings in order to complete the required report. Among other things, the study will address (1) the incremental cost to the State for weather events due to climate change; (2) the likelihood of having similar weather in the future; (3) the potential connection between the 2010 winter storms and climate change; and (4) other meteorological conditions that may have led to the 2010 winter storms. MDE and MDOT may be required to redirect existing staff resources from other projects to complete the required report.

The bill expresses the General Assembly's intent that, based on the report submitted pursuant to the bill, the Governor appropriate sufficient fiscal 2012 funds to support the investments necessary to prepare for future weather emergencies in the State. To the extent the Governor does so, general fund expenditures increase, potentially significantly, in fiscal 2012.

State Revenues: The bill expresses the General Assembly's intent that, based on the report submitted pursuant to the bill, the Governor direct a request to the President of the United States and the Maryland Congressional Delegation to provide specified federal funds to the State to prepare for future weather emergencies in the State. To the extent such funds are available, and to the extent the bill results in any such funds being directed to the State, federal fund revenues increase.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

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