

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 594

(Delegate McIntosh, *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Department of Natural Resources - Pamela J. Kelly Tree-Mendous Maryland Program

This bill establishes a Pamela J. Kelly Tree-Mendous Maryland Program, administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), declaring that it is in the public interest to have a program that encourages the involvement of residents of the State in active stewardship of the State's natural resources by planting native trees. The program is established for the purpose of planting native trees and shrubs on public lands, community open spaces, school grounds, and rights-of-way; it is funded by donations and grants received by DNR for the program. DNR is authorized to seek, accept, and expend donations and grants for the implementation and administration of the program.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill effectively codifies an existing program, which DNR indicates is currently funded by grants and donations.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: Although not established in statute or regulations, DNR currently administers a program called Tree-Mendous Maryland which provides native trees and shrubs at reasonable prices for plantings on public lands. The trees may be planted in places such as community open spaces, school grounds, government facilities, and rights-of-way but not at private residences. Tree-Mendous Maryland also includes a

Gift of Trees program where planting of a native tree or trees can be given as a gift in honor or memory of family and friends to celebrate holidays, birthdays, or other special occasions. Tree-Mendous Maryland arranges for the tree(s) to be planted in the county in Maryland in which the recipient of the gift certificate lives. Annual expenditures under the Tree-Mendous Maryland program have ranged in recent years from about \$38,000 to \$57,000.

There are various provisions of State law generally aimed at preserving and enhancing the State's tree and forest resources, and DNR's Forest Service has a stated mission of restoring, managing, and protecting Maryland's trees, forests, and forested ecosystems to sustain the State's natural resources and connect people to the land. DNR indicates that the service offers tree planting opportunities through a number of programs, including Tree-Mendous Maryland. There is also a State tree nursery, the John S. Ayton Nursery in Preston, Maryland, which produces tree and shrub seedlings each year for reforestation and other plantings across Maryland and Delaware.

Tree planting is also a part of the State's Smart, Green, and Growing Initiative, which has set a goal of planting 100,000 trees by the end of 2012.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 27, 2012
ncs/lgc

Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy

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