

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
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FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1479 (Delegate O'Donnell)
Environmental Matters

**Hunting, Fishing, and Boat Manufacturer's or Dealer's License Applications -
Disclosure of Information**

This bill alters the information that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) may require on an application for specified hunting, fishing, and boat manufacturer or dealer licenses. License applicants are required to disclose only the last four digits of their Social Security number, rather than the entire number, and DNR is required to record the partial Social Security number for applicants, rather than the entire number, on license applications. The bill limits the information that DNR may require on fishing and hunting license applications to (1) an applicant's full first, middle, and last name; (2) an applicant's date of birth; and (3) the last four digits of an applicant's Social Security number. DNR may only require the last four digits of an applicant's Social Security or tax identification number on a boat manufacturer or dealer license application. The bill alters the information that DNR must provide to the Child Support Enforcement Administration (CSEA) about specified licensees or license applicants.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: DNR general fund expenditures increase by an estimated \$100,000 in FY 2013 to reprogram licensing systems. Potential significant decrease in federal grant funding for child support enforcement services and the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program. Potential minimal reduction in special fund revenues to the extent that the bill reduces collection of child support.

(in dollars)	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
SF/FF Rev.	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
GF Expenditure	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Effect	(\$100,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

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

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The State operates several intercept programs to collect delinquent child support payments, including the interception of tax refunds, lottery prizes, and vendor payments.

In accordance with the Family Law Article, licensing authorities, which include DNR among others, must require each license applicant to disclose their Social Security number and record that number on the application. CSEA may ask licensing authorities for information concerning any obligor in arrears in paying child support. A request by CSEA for this information must contain the full name and Social Security number of the obligor and may be transmitted to a licensing authority using an electronic format. In addition, upon request, a licensing authority must also submit the obligor's address and a description of the license held by the obligor. CSEA is authorized to request that a licensing authority suspend or deny a person's license, in specified circumstances.

In accordance with federal law, states must develop a plan for child and spousal support that includes specified items, including procedures requiring that the Social Security number of any applicant for a professional license, driver's license, occupational license, recreational license, or marriage license be recorded on the application. If a state allows a number other than the Social Security number to be used on the face of the document while the Social Security number is kept on file, the state must advise an applicant.

In accordance with the Natural Resources Article, DNR must comply with the license requirements summarized below.

- An applicant for a recreational fishing license must provide his or her Social Security number, if the applicant has a Social Security number; and, generally, the applicant's Social Security number may not be disclosed as part of the application's public record.
- An applicant for specified anglers' and finfish licenses must provide all of the information requested by DNR.
- An application for a boat manufacturer or dealer license must be made on the form DNR prescribes and must, among other things, contain the applicant's name and address and be verified by oath or affirmation of the applicant.

- An application for a hunting license must contain the applicant's name, height, color of eyes and hair, occupation, place of residence, and Social Security number.

Background: DNR preserves, protects, enhances, and restores the State's natural resources for the use and enjoyment of all citizens. DNR is also responsible for issuing numerous different licenses, including licenses that permit individuals to engage in specified fishing and hunting activities and sell vessels. DNR's Licensing and Registration Service operates seven regional service centers that assist the public with vessel titling and registration, off-road vehicle registration, commercial fishing licenses, and hunting and sport fishing licenses.

CSEA, a division of the Department of Human Resources (DHR), administers and monitors child support services provided by local departments of social services and other offices, provides technical assistance, formulates policy, develops and implements new programs, and ensures compliance with regulations and policy. Social Security numbers are a key tool CSEA uses to enforce payments from noncustodial parents.

In September 2011, the Office of Legislative Audits (OLA) released a fiscal compliance audit for CSEA covering the period from September 1, 2007, to October 20, 2010. A majority of audit findings relate to CSEA's use of enforcement procedures, and OLA notes that various enforcement tools were not used effectively. One finding concerned the use of occupational license suspension as a collection enforcement tool. The audit notes that, while CSEA can request State licensing authorities to suspend occupational licenses of noncustodial parents who are more than 120 days delinquent in their child support obligations, CSEA had obtained data from only 7 of the 15 licensing authorities. In response to the audit, CSEA is currently developing agreements with licensing authorities, including DNR, to expand the use of this enforcement mechanism.

State Fiscal Effect: DNR general fund expenditures increase by an estimated \$100,000 in fiscal 2013 for contractual costs associated with reprogramming licensing system software. This estimate reflects software adjustments to DNR's existing COIN licensing system and to the new COMPASS licensing system, which has been partially deployed.

Special fund revenues may be reduced to the extent that the bill reduces child support collections. Temporary cash assistance (TCA) recipients must assign their support rights to the State and federal government as partial reimbursement for TCA payments made on behalf of the children of the obligor; as a result, TCA child support collections are distributed 50% to the State and 50% to the federal government. Accordingly, the State and federal governments would share equally in any reduction in collection revenues. Any such reduction cannot be quantified at this time due to the unavailability of data; however, any impact on collections is expected to be minimal.

DHR advises that failing to comply with federal laws that require license applicants to provide their Social Security numbers may result in the loss of significant federal grant funding. Specifically, DHR advises the bill may result in a reduction in federal funding for child support enforcement services (about \$77.1 million) and the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program (about \$229.1 million).

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, Department of Natural Resources, Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of Legislative Services

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