

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 650 (Senators Getty and Edwards)
 Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Natural Resources - Hunting License Applications - Social Security Number

This bill prohibits the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) from requiring a hunting license applicant to disclose his/her Social Security number. DNR is not required to provide the Child Support Enforcement Administration (CSEA) with the Social Security number of a person that has, or applies for, a hunting license.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: DNR general fund expenditures increase by \$50,000 in FY 2014 to reprogram licensing systems. Potential significant decrease in federal grant funding for child support enforcement services and the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. Potential minimal reduction in special fund revenues to the extent that the bill reduces collection of child support.

(in dollars)	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
SF/FF Rev.	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
GF Expenditure	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Effect	(\$50,000)	\$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 wages.

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, 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 to 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.

DNR's COMPASS online licensing and registration system was designed so that an individual can access or create a personal DNR licensing account via the Internet, telephone, or U.S. mail or by visiting a DNR service center. Individuals may also establish a personal DNR licensing account at 1 of DNR's approximately 250 sports license agent locations throughout the State. Once an individual creates an account, he/she is issued a DNR identification card that contains a unique identification number (not a Social Security number) to use for future licensing purchases. A person's Social

Security number is required only to establish a DNR licensing account and it is not requested subsequently to process licensing transactions.

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.

State Fiscal Effect: DNR general fund expenditures increase by \$50,000 in fiscal 2014 for contractual costs associated with reprogramming licensing system software. This estimate reflects software adjustments to the new COMPASS licensing system that establish a new personal identification methodology.

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 special fund revenues 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 \$81.4 million) and TANF (about \$229.1 million).

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 1479 of 2012, a similar bill, was referred to interim study by the House Environmental Matters Committee.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, Department of Natural Resources, Comptroller's Office, Department of Legislative Services

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