

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 850 (Delegate Smigiel, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations and
Appropriations

Health - Education Campaign Relating to Mental Health Issues - Funding

This bill requests that the Governor include sufficient funding in the fiscal 2016 budget for the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to develop and implement an educational campaign to eliminate the stigma that discourages individuals from seeking assistance for mental health issues.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Depending on the breadth and magnitude of the requested educational campaign, general fund expenditures may increase – potentially significantly – in FY 2016 only to develop and implement an educational campaign. As an appropriation is not mandated, the bill may have no fiscal impact. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Background: DHMH's Behavioral Health Administration grants \$100,000 in funding to the Baltimore City Core Service Agency (CSA) for the provision of anti-stigma training. Additionally, CSA contracts with a vendor, On Our Own of Maryland, to provide a consumer-operated program to address the issue of stigma within the public mental health system.

According to DHMH, CSA must provide at least 50 two-hour presentations dealing with the stigma of mental illness. Forty of the presentations must be for consumers, family members, and mental health professionals. The other 10 must be for members of consumer self-help groups. CSA must issue four newsletter articles regarding the stigma of mental illness; these articles must be distributed for publication in the newsletter of local and national mental health organizations.

According to On Our Own of Maryland's website, the Anti-Stigma Project was formed in 1993 by the Maryland Mental Hygiene Administration in collaboration with On Our Own of Maryland to reduce stigma within the behavioral health system. The mission of The Anti-Stigma Project is to fight stigma by raising consciousness, facilitating ongoing dialogues, searching for creative solutions, and educating all participants within or connected to the behavioral health community, including consumers, family members, providers, educators, and administrators.

Finally, the State budget provided \$300,000 in fiscal 2014 (and the Governor's proposed fiscal 2015 budget includes \$300,000) for Mental Health First Aid Funding, which includes anti-stigma training.

State Fiscal Effect: Should the Governor determine that current funding levels for DHMH's anti-stigma efforts are inadequate and decide to fulfill this request, general fund expenditures increase – potentially significantly. However, the Department of Legislative Services is unable to provide a specific estimate given the significant funding variance depending on the scope and breadth of any such campaign. Any impact would only be on general fund expenditures in fiscal 2016.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Budget and Management, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, On Our Own Maryland, Department of Legislative Services

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mm/ljm

Analysis by: Kathleen P. Kennedy

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