

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 671
Judiciary

(Prince George's County Delegation)

**Task Force on the Creation of a Juvenile Assessment Center and Constructive
Alternatives to Managing Youth at Risk of Delinquency in Prince George's
County
PG 306-15**

This bill establishes the Task Force on the Creation of a Juvenile Assessment Center and Constructive Alternatives to Managing Youth at Risk of Delinquency in Prince George's County. The Prince George's County Executive must provide staff for the task force and designate a chair. By October 1, 2015, the task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Prince George's County Delegation.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2015, and terminates June 30, 2016.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any expense reimbursements for task force members are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing resources.

Local Effect: Any expense reimbursements for task force members and staffing costs for Prince George's County are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The task force is required to (1) identify, study, and report on the current intake process for juveniles who come into contact with the Prince George's County

juvenile justice system; (2) review successful juvenile assessment center models from other counties and states and gather research relating to juvenile assessment centers; and (3) receive input or testimony from specified entities.

The task force must make recommendations on (1) how a juvenile assessment center in the county could be funded; (2) a feasible location and hours of operation for a juvenile assessment center in Prince George's County; and (3) alternatives to managing youth at risk of delinquency in Prince George's County. The task force must also make recommendations relating to the benefits, risks, and costs associated with the creation of a juvenile assessment center and other alternatives to managing youth at risk of delinquency in the county, including ways to address the following goals: (1) providing a comprehensive assessment of the needs of juveniles; (2) improving case management and treatment; (3) making efficient use of law enforcement, juvenile justice, and treatment resources; (4) avoiding unnecessary detention of juveniles; (5) enhancing information sharing across agencies; and (6) improving the monitoring of system performance.

A member of the task force may not receive compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations, as provided in the State budget.

Background: As noted in the bill's preamble, juvenile assessment centers are intended to provide a comprehensive and integrated system to coordinate and monitor services and treatment progression for juveniles. For example, the Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center (BCJCC) includes circuit court rooms, juvenile master hearing rooms, and offices for other entities involved in the juvenile justice system in addition to employees of the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) who perform intake and assessment services. DJS also operates a secure detention center for male youth at BCJCC.

According to intake data from its Data Resource Guide, DJS received 2,684 complaints involving Prince George's County juveniles in fiscal 2014.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 994 of 2014 was withdrawn prior to a hearing in the House Judiciary Committee.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 25, 2015

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