

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 669 (Delegates Tarlau and Fennell)
Health and Government Operations

Task Force to Study the Establishment of a Senior Volunteer Corps

This bill creates the Task Force to Study the Establishment of a Senior Volunteer Corps, which is to be staffed by the Department of Aging (MDoA). The task force must study and make recommendations regarding (1) the coordination and expansion of existing programs that connect seniors who are interested in volunteering with community service opportunities; (2) the development and implementation of additional methods for connecting seniors who are interested in volunteering with local governments in need of assistance providing community services; and (3) the potential benefits of establishing a statewide database of senior volunteers.

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

Fiscal Summary

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

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The Governor must designate the chair of the task force. By December 1, 2015, the task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly.

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: According to Senior Corps, which is part of the Corporation for National and Community Service, there are numerous benefits for senior citizens who engage in volunteer work. For example, seniors who volunteer maintain good brain function and may experience increases in cognitive abilities. Seniors who volunteer have also been reported to have lower mortality rates. Because senior volunteers spend more time in communities, they increase their social and support networks and are provided with a sense of accomplishment by helping others.

State Expenditures: MDoA estimates that it needs one part-time contractual employee to staff the task force and prepare the required report. Due to the limited duties and duration of the task force, the Department of Legislative Services advises that existing staff may instead be reallocated to staff the task force and prepare the required report.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Aging, Senior Corps, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 10, 2015
md/lgc

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