

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1399 (Delegate Waldstreicher, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations

Task Force on the Regulation of Caterers

This bill establishes the Task Force on the Regulation of Caterers. The Office of the Comptroller must staff the task force. A member of the task force may not receive compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under standard State travel regulations, as provided in the State budget. The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by January 1, 2019. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2018, and terminates June 30, 2019.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Minimal increase in general fund expenditures in FY 2018 and 2019 only to staff the task force and develop the required report. Any expense reimbursements for task force members are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local government finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The task force must (1) study specified issues related to the general regulatory framework of caterers, including licensing, inspections, audits, and national best practices and (2) make recommendations on the issues studied, including possible changes to regulations or law and a possible cessation of audits and inspections of caterers for a period of time.

Current Law: The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) has statutory authority to regulate food service facilities, including caterers, which are food service facilities that offer catering services or identify as caterers. “Catering services” means the preparation or provision and the serving of food or drink by a food service facility for service at the provider’s premises or elsewhere in connection with a specific event or a business or social function or affair.

A person may not operate a food establishment without a license. A caterer must include its food service facility license number on all advertising business cards and other forms of advertising and all contracts for catering services, as specified. Local health departments provide enforcement and conduct regular inspections of food service facilities.

State Expenditures: The Office of the Comptroller can implement the bill’s requirements with only a minimal increase in general fund expenditures, in fiscal 2018 and 2019 only, to staff the task force and prepare the required report. MDH must likely provide assistance as the Office of the Comptroller does not regulate caterers and does not have industry-specific knowledge. It is assumed that MDH can provide assistance using existing budgeted staff and resources.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 833 (Senator Madaleno, *et al.*) - Finance.

Information Source(s): Comptroller’s Office; Maryland Association of County Health Officers; Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 27, 2018
md/jc

Analysis by: Kathleen P. Kennedy

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