

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2020 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

Senate Bill 451 (Senator Rosapepe, *et al.*)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

---

**Secretary of State - Duties - International Friendship Agreements**

---

This bill authorizes the Secretary of State (SOS) to form and execute an international friendship agreement that may function as a foundation to build a sister-state relationship.

---

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill is authorizing in nature and does not directly affect governmental finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

---

**Analysis**

**Current Law/Background:** SOS is the lead agency responsible for the maintenance and development of the Maryland Sister States Program. The program, established in 1980, operates in partnership with the Sister States of Maryland, a private, nonprofit corporation, to oversee and promote international exchanges. According to SOS, the program includes 21 relationships in 18 countries, including China, Japan, France, Vietnam, Belgium, South Korea, Poland, Russia, Mexico, Brazil, Liberia, Estonia, Turkey, Ireland, Nigeria, South Africa, Israel, and Peru.

---

**Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** HB 585 (Delegate Kipke, *et al.*) - Health and Government Operations.

**Information Source(s):** Secretary of State; Sister States of Maryland; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 11, 2020  
rh/mcr

---

Analysis by: Elizabeth J. Allison

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