



Maryland

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET
AND MANAGEMENT

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HOUSE BILL 836 COVID-19 Testing, Contact Tracing, and Vaccination Act of 2021 (Pena-Melnyk)

STATEMENT OF INFORMATION

DATE: February 23, 2021

COMMITTEE: House Health & Government Operations

SUMMARY OF BILL: HB 836 mandates annual appropriations in FY 2021 and FY 2022 in the amounts of: \$25 million to expand capacity for COVID-19 testing and contact tracing in local jurisdictions; \$15 million to vaccinate; \$9 million in FY 2021 and \$36 million in FY 2022 to assisted living and home health care facilities to provide testing for residents, patients, and staff; (expresses legislative intent to provide) \$5.5 million in FY 2021 and \$22 million in FY 2022 for testing nursing home residents and staff; expresses legislative intent to fund with federal funding provided in calendar years 2020-2022 and supplement with General Funds, as needed; and specifies additional requirements for the Department of Health to submit plans and reporting on COVID-19 testing, contact tracing and vaccinations.

EXPLANATION: HB 836 attempts to mandate \$54.5 million in FY 2021 and \$98 million in FY 2022 for a total of \$152.5 million, but is more appropriately viewed as expressing legislative intent since the General Assembly cannot mandate appropriations any earlier than FY 2023. The Department of Health has spearheaded the coordination and funding of COVID-19 testing, contact tracing and vaccinations throughout the pandemic.

Local jurisdictions have received significant funding amounts for these purposes during the Summer and Fall of 2020. Those jurisdictions with populations in excess of 500,000 received federal funding directly. Governor allocated \$363 million to local governments from the Coronavirus Relief Fund to cover pandemic related costs. Approximately \$62 million remained unspent, as of the end of December 2020.

The Governor recently announced \$114 million awarded to local health departments (on a reimburseable basis) for vaccination activities. Local health departments are also slated to receive an additional \$5.4 million in COVID-19 Crisis Cooperative Agreement funding (from the December 2020 congressional action). The Biden stimulus package includes \$1.9 billion for Maryland local governments.

**For additional information, contact Barbara Wilkins at
(410) 260-6371 or barbara.wilkins1@maryland.gov**