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Lieutenant Governor



DAVID R. BRINKLEY
Secretary

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

HOUSE BILL 345 Baltimore City and Prince George's County - Grant Funding - Violence Prevention and Community Services (D. Barnes)

STATEMENT OF INFORMATION

DATE: February 8, 2022

COMMITTEE: House Appropriations

SUMMARY OF BILL: HB 345 mandates an annual appropriation in the amount of \$500,000 each to the Prince George's State's Attorney's Office and the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office to provide grants to nonprofit organizations to fund violence prevention and community service initiatives.

EXPLANATION: The Department of Budget and Management's focus is not on the underlying policy proposal being advanced by the legislation, but rather on the aggregate \$1 million mandated appropriation provision that impacts the FY 2024 and subsequent budgets. The FY 2023 Budget includes \$1.7 million for the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office and \$1.1 million for the Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office.

DBM has the responsibility of submitting a balanced budget to the General Assembly annually, which will require spending allocations for FY 2024 to be within the official revenues estimates approved by the Board of Revenue Estimates in December 2022.

Changes to the Maryland Constitution in 2020 provide the General Assembly with additional budgetary authority, beginning in the 2023 Session, to realign total spending by increasing and adding items to appropriations in the budget submitted by the Governor. The legislature's new budgetary power diminishes, if not negates, the need for mandated appropriation bills.

Fully funding the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Kirwan) will require fiscal discipline in the years ahead, if the State is to maintain the current projected structural budget surpluses. Mandated spending increases need to be reevaluated within the context of this education funding priority and the Governor's tax relief proposals.

Economic conditions remain precarious as a result of COVID-19. High rates of inflation and workforce shortages may be short lived or persist, thereby impacting the Maryland economy. While current budget forecasts project structural surpluses, the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to present a significant budgetary vulnerability. The Department continues to urge the General Assembly to focus on maintaining the structural budget surplus.

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