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## **SENATE BILL 598 Maryland Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund - Appropriation (J. Carter)**

### **STATEMENT OF INFORMATION**

**DATE: February 22, 2023**

**COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation Committee**

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** SB 598 mandates an annual appropriation of \$40 million in general funds to the Maryland Violence Intervention and Prevention Program Fund (VIPP). The VIPP mandate is currently \$3 million in general funds annually, as established in Chapter 17 of 2021.

**EXPLANATION:** The purpose of the VIPP program is to support effective violence reduction strategies, specifically gun violence, through evidence-based or evidence-informed health programs. Evidence-based and evidence-informed health programs are those programs or initiatives that are developed and evaluated through scientific research and data collection and use public health principles that demonstrate measurable positive outcomes in preventing gun violence. The FY 2024 Governor's Allowance includes \$3 million in general funds for the VIPP fund, and this legislation would increase the amount of mandated general funds for the VIPP Program Fund from \$3 million to \$40 million annually.

Since FY 2020, state support for the VIPP fund has grown from \$1.8 million to \$3 million. In the past four years, the average annual expenditure of VIPP funds is just over \$1 million. Recent spending trends indicate that the current level of funding provided for VIPP is greater than the current expenditure levels. In fact, during the 2021 legislative session the Department of Legislative Services reduced all the general funds in VIPP due to a significant fund balance in the program. Increasing mandated VIPP funding would not guarantee that all funding would be expended in that fiscal year.

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) is charged with submitting a balanced budget to the General Assembly annually and strives to create a structurally balanced budget, in which the growth in spending is less than the growth in revenues. In light of current economic uncertainty and the potential for a downturn, the Department urges caution in passing legislation significantly expanding State required expenditures. State government must be intentional, disciplined, and strategic with its allocation of State funding to ensure maximum impact toward priority outcomes.

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**General Fund Structural Budget Outlook, Fiscal 2024 – 2028 (\$ millions)**

	<b>Est. 2024</b>	<b>Est. 20235</b>	<b>Est. 2026</b>	<b>Est. 2027</b>	<b>Est. 2028</b>
<b>Structural Balance</b>	\$337	\$232	\$263	\$529	\$1,113
<b>Adjusted for Blueprint</b>				-\$963	-\$1,207

Department of Legislative Services, January 2023 Fiscal Briefing

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