

Department of Fiscal Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 159 (Senator Kelley, *et al.*)
Judicial Proceedings

Parole and Probation - Supervision Fees - Family Violence Units

This bill increases, from \$25 to \$40, the monthly fee assessed on persons under the supervision of the Division of Parole and Probation. The division is required to dedicate the additional \$15 to its budget for specialized family violence units.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Special fund revenue increase ranging from \$378,000 to \$402,000 in FY 1998 as discussed below. Expenditures could be affected as discussed below.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None. The bill would not directly affect small businesses.

Fiscal Analysis

Background: There are several factors that influence the actual collection of supervision fees including: (1) the fact that the courts are authorized to waive the fee; (2) the collection of these fees has a relatively low priority for the courts; and (3) delinquent fee payments turned over to the Central Collections Unit of the Department of Budget and Management have a collection cost of 2%.

The actual percentage of these fees collected has declined in recent years. The Division of Parole and Probation reports that there were approximately 32% in fiscal 1994, 24% in fiscal 1995, and 12% in fiscal 1996. The division believes that predicting future collections should rely on a collection rate of between 8% and 8 1/2% for the foreseeable future.

State Revenues: The Division of Parole and Probation estimates the number of court

ordered parolees for fiscal 1998 to be approximately 35,000. An additional \$15 added to the supervision fee assessed on each parolee under the provisions of this bill would theoretically result in additional revenue of \$6,300,000 for the division. Though the bill does not specifically create, or require the creation of, a family violence unit special fund, it is assumed that such a fund would be created by the division to receive (and spend) these dedicated monies.

However, since actual collection rates of these fees are estimated to range from 8% to 8 1/2%, the additional revenue derived under this bill is estimated to range from \$504,000 to \$535,500 annually. Due to the bill's October 1, 1997 effective date, special fund revenues for fiscal 1998 are estimated to increase from \$378,000 to \$401,625.

The Department of Fiscal Services advises that actual collections of the increased fee may also be influenced by changes currently being considered for collection methodologies. Any such improvement in the actual collection rate would increase revenues for specialized family violence units by an indeterminate amount.

State Expenditures: It is assumed that a special fund will be created because the bill dedicates the revenue collected from the fee increase to specialized family violence units. While the fiscal 1998 budget does not include an appropriation for specialized family violence units, the revenue that accumulates in the fund could be appropriated through either supplemental or budget amendment processes in fiscal 1998.

Information Source(s): Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Division of Parole and Probation), Department of Fiscal Services

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