

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2001 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 774 (Delegates Dembrow and R. Baker)
Judiciary

Crimes - Animal Cruelty - Inspections of Circuses

This bill authorizes a local animal control board to inspect a circus to determine if any animals are being treated cruelly. The circus must allow the inspection in a reasonable manner and at a reasonable time. The local board must report any finding of mistreatment or refusal to allow inspection to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill would not directly affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: It is expected that any inspections of circuses by local animal control boards could be handled with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal Care program is the oversight agency for the welfare of circus animals. The federal Animal Welfare Act of 1966 requires that minimum standards of care and treatment be provided for most warm-blooded animals bred for commercial sale, used in research, transported commercially, or exhibited to the public. This includes zoos, circuses, and marine mammal facilities.

Background: In enforcing the Animal Welfare Act, the Animal Care program conducts randomly scheduled, unannounced inspections to ensure all regulated facilities comply with the law. The Animal Care program is headquartered in Riverdale Park, Maryland.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Anne Arundel, Garrett, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties; City of Laurel; Department of Legislative Services

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