

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2007 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Revised**

Senate Bill 476

(Senator Zirkin)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Judiciary

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**Task Force to Study Group Home Education and Placement Practices**

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This bill establishes a task force to study the current status of group home education and the placement practices of State agencies. The task force must make recommendations for future requirements for the placement of children in programs licensed by the State after considering funding issues, the educational needs of youth served by group homes, and the feasibility and impact of having separate programs and facilities for children placed by different State agencies. An interim report is due from the task force by December 1, 2007, and a final report is due by December 1, 2008. The Governor's Office for Children (GOC) must staff the task force.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2007 and terminates June 30, 2009.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Any costs associated with the task force are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within the budgets of GOC and State agencies participating in the task force.

**Local Effect:** Local social services representatives appointed to the task force could participate without materially impacting local budgets.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Background:** A September 2000 Executive Order established the Task Force to Study the Licensing and Monitoring of Community-Based Homes for Children. The task force

met from February to September 2001 and held two public hearings for citizens to voice their concerns about group homes. One of the issues addressed by citizens was the adverse impact that group homes have on local schools and community resources. Although the task force acknowledged that this particular recommendation was outside of its charge, the task force suggested in its final report that further study be conducted to assess the effect that group home placements have on local schools.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** A similar bill as introduced, HB 526 of 2003, received an unfavorable report from the House Ways and Means Committee.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Human Resources, Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 27, 2007  
mll/rhh Revised - Senate Third Reader - April 2, 2007  
Revised - Enrolled Bill - May 11, 2007

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