

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1245

(Delegate Dumais, *et al.*)

Judiciary

Juvenile Services - Closure of the Thomas J. S. Waxter Children's Center

This bill requires the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to develop and implement a plan to close the Thomas J.S. Waxter Children’s Center (Waxter) by July 1, 2011, and repeals the authority of DJS to operate Waxter as of July 1, 2011.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures decrease by approximately \$5.5 million beginning in FY 2012 to reflect the mandatory closing of Waxter. DJS can use existing resources in FY 2011 to develop and implement a plan to close Waxter by July 1, 2011.

(\$ in millions)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	0	(5.5)	(5.5)	(5.5)	(5.5)
Net Effect	\$0	\$5.5	\$5.5	\$5.5	\$5.5

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: DJS is required to serve children in the juvenile services system with programming that uses detention and committed facilities that are operationally separate from each other and that do not share common program space, including dining halls and educational or recreational facilities.

Waxter's Children's Center, located in Laurel, is the only State-operated facility devoted exclusively to females. It serves both detention and committed youth.

The Facilities Master Plan of DJS noted that the current structure of Waxter allows for the commingling of detention and committed youth. The DJS Facilities Master Plan proposed moving the detention program to another location and renovating the existing structure to use as a site for a 12-bed secure treatment program. Construction for the new detention program is scheduled to be completed in fiscal 2016 at a cost of approximately \$50 million (pending approval of funding).

State Fiscal Effect: General fund expenditures decrease by approximately \$5.5 million beginning in fiscal 2012, which reflects the bill's requirement for DJS to close Waxter by July 1, 2011. This estimate reflects the elimination of funds that are currently being used to operate Waxter, which are approximately \$7.1 million in fiscal 2011 and assumed to be constant in the out-years, and is offset by costs associated with relocating the current secure treatment population to out-of-state placements. The information and assumptions used in calculating the estimate are as follows:

- Because the bill allows Waxter to remain open until July 1, 2011, DJS will continue to operate Waxter until that time; therefore there will be no expenditure impact in fiscal 2011. DJS can use existing resources in fiscal 2011 to develop a plan to close Waxter by July 1, 2011.
- Because there are currently no other alternatives in state for girls in secure treatment, these individuals who are currently being treated at Waxter will have to be sent out of state. The average costs per year for an out-of-state placement is estimated at \$130,000, which is based on the average costs for boys. The average daily population for secure treatment is projected to be 12 girls, which reflects the projection in the DJS Gap Analysis Addendum.

The estimate does not reflect costs associated with the relocation of the secure detention and pending placement population at Waxter, which has an estimated combined average daily population of 25. Although some individuals may be moved to the facilities at Noyes and the Lower Eastern Shore (the only other facilities in the State that house girls), it is not anticipated that these two facilities will have a combined capacity available to house all of the girls from Waxter. Accordingly, DJS will have to devise a strategy to accommodate these individuals, which may impact finances and operations at other DJS-operated facilities. Because the bill requires DJS to develop and implement an appropriate plan to close Waxter within the next fiscal year, any further costs associated with the implementation of its plan cannot be reliably estimated beforehand.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Legislative Services

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ncs/kdm

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