

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 751

(Delegate Luedtke, *et al.*)

Environmental Matters

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Agriculture - Jane Lawton Farm-to-School Program - Reporting**

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This bill requires each local educational agency participating in the Jane Lawton Farm-to-School Program to report to the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), by January 1 of each year, the types and amounts of farm products purchased from farms in the State.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** The bill's reporting requirement is expected to be handled with existing resources.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** The Jane Lawton Farm-to-School Program was established within MDA pursuant to Chapters 371 and 372 of 2008 for various purposes generally aimed at promoting and facilitating the sale of farm products grown in the State to Maryland schools. The program is also charged with establishing promotional events that promote State agriculture and farm products to children through school meal and classroom programs, including a Maryland Homegrown School Lunch Week. No reporting requirements associated with the program are currently specified in statute.

**Background:** MDA indicates that all of the public school systems in the State participate in the Jane Lawton Farm-to-School Program, and in 2010, over 30 different

Maryland farms provided fresh Maryland-grown agriculture products to the schools. The December 2010 report on the Maryland Food Policy Workgroup Summer Study (conducted to “explore opportunities for systems-based and policy-level changes that improve nutrition and healthy food access in Maryland”) noted a significant amount of remaining capacity to increase the amount of locally grown fruits and vegetables purchased by Maryland schools. The report indicated that approximately \$17.9 million is spent on produce for Maryland schools each year, but that many factors influence school systems’ ability to purchase the produce locally, including a limited growing season, limited quantities, pricing, distribution issues, and customer acceptance.

The summer study report noted that the Jane Lawton Farm-to-School Program does not receive State or private funding and is coordinated by a working committee led by MDA and the Maryland State Department of Education. The report recommended expanding the program by strengthening the coordinating committee to facilitate additional agricultural products availability at local schools as well as other institutions.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Association of Boards of Education, Baltimore City, Maryland Food Policy Workgroup, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 28, 2011  
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Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510