

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 236
Economic Matters

(Delegate Stukes, *et al.*)

Insurance - Maryland Insurance Information Day (MII Day)

This bill authorizes insurance producers to hold insurance coverage symposiums and allows insurance carriers and insurance producers to accept applications for insurance at the symposiums. The bill requires any symposium held under the bill's provisions to be called a "Maryland Insurance Information Day (MII Day)."

Fiscal Summary

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

Local Effect: Potential minimal increase in local revenues or expenditures due to the use of government facilities by an insurance producer holding a symposium.

Small Business Effect: Minimal. Insurance producers, some of which are small businesses, may benefit from increased exposure to consumers.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The insurance coverage symposiums must provide individuals with an opportunity to learn about different types of available insurance and how insurance reduces financial exposure to unpredictable events. Symposiums must also provide an opportunity to bring insurance products to new markets. The symposiums may include information about automobile, health, homeowner's, life, and any other types of insurance that may be of interest to the public.

The symposiums may be held in locations around the State, including high schools, libraries, and senior citizen centers, that are easily accessible by public transportation and include previously underserved markets.

The public may be made aware of the symposiums through (1) public service announcements by local media; (2) announcements by faith-based organizations; (3) outreach at local health department clinics; and (4) notification of civic groups and resident associations, including the groups listed in the Baltimore City Department of Planning's Community Association Directory.

Current Law/Background: The Maryland Insurance Administration (MIA) is required to have a Consumer Education and Advocacy Program. The purposes of this program are to (1) provide information and help consumers with the procedures for filing a complaint with the Commissioner against any person regulated by MIA; (2) on request, give information about an insurer to the extent that the information lawfully is disclosable; and (3) develop an information and assistance system to provide information about and to help consumers with personal insurance coverages, underwriting policies, claim procedures of insurers, and other relevant services.

MIA notes that it schedules more than 500 outreach programs a year through the program and that its staff travels to events throughout the State.

Further, insurance producers must follow the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Medicare Marketing Guidelines. The guidelines state that, if a health fair or health promotional event is billed as educational, then the plan sponsor must not include a sales presentation at the event. CMS guidelines are enforced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Frederick County advises that its current policies prohibit the use of government facilities by for-profit organizations.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore, Charles, Frederick, and Montgomery counties; Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; Maryland Insurance Administration; Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; Department of Legislative Services

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