

**Department of Legislative Services**  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2015 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

Senate Bill 51 (Senator Serafini, *et al.*)  
 Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Health and Government Operations

**Commission on African American History and Culture - Duties**

This bill authorizes the Commission on African American History and Culture to provide operational funding to a museum that specializes in African American history and culture.

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Assuming the commission uses the authority provided by the bill, general fund expenditures increase significantly beginning in FY 2016 to provide grants to museums. *Under one set of assumptions*, general fund expenditures increase by \$484,503 in FY 2016 to implement a grant program. Future year estimates reflect annualization and inflation. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	484,500	647,100	655,100	663,300	671,600
Net Effect	(\$484,500)	(\$647,100)	(\$655,100)	(\$663,300)	(\$671,600)

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

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential meaningful impact to the extent that any museums that receive grants from the commission are considered small businesses.

## Analysis

**Current Law:** The Commission on African American History and Culture, a part of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives (GOCI), was first established, under a different name, by Chapter 435 of 1969. The commission is required to:

- initiate, direct, and coordinate projects that further the understanding of African American history and culture;
- operate the Banneker-Douglass Museum in Annapolis to house and display photographs, objects, oral history tapes, artifacts, and other materials of African American historic and cultural significance;
- locate, preserve, and disseminate to the public information about significant buildings and sites relating to African American history and culture; and
- publish an annual report and any other material that the commission considers necessary.

Chapter 278 of 2010 established the African American Heritage Preservation Program, a capital grant program jointly administered by the commission and the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) within the Maryland Department of Planning. The purpose of the program is to identify and preserve buildings, communities, and sites of historical and cultural importance to the African American experience in Maryland. The Governor must include \$1.0 million in the annual capital budget for program grant projects. Program applications must include a description of the scope and purpose of the project, a building plan that includes the total cost of the project, and any other information required by MHT and the commission. MHT and the commission recommend a list of projects and grantees for funding. Program grants require matching funds from other sources, and a grantee is required to enter into an agreement to preserve and maintain the property. The program terminates on May 31, 2015.

**Background:** The commission advises that approximately 40 African American-focused heritage institutions are currently established in Maryland. The commission notes that this includes archives, foundations, museums, and historical societies. The commission also advises that up until 2015, 20 sites that were awarded African American Heritage Preservation grants expressed plans to establish a museum and/or cultural center.

The commission currently operates one museum, the Banneker-Douglass Museum. GOCI advises that the Governor's proposed fiscal 2016 budget includes approximately \$600,000 for the operations of the Banneker-Douglass Museum. The commission collects modest revenues from the museum in the form of one-time grants and donations to the museum. In fiscal 2015, the commission had an operating budget of \$576,608, with approximately

95% of funding originating from general funds and 5% from special funds. The majority of special funds were generated by the Banneker-Douglass Museum.

In fiscal 2015, 14 grants were awarded under the African American Heritage Preservation Program. Grant awards totaled \$1 million, with individual awards ranging from \$15,000 to \$95,000.

**State Expenditures:** Assuming the commission uses the authority provided by the bill, general fund expenditures increase to establish a grant program. Although the commission can fund any museum that specializes in African American history and culture, for purposes of this fiscal and policy note, the Department of Legislative Services assumes that the total funding provided for operations of other museums under the bill is equivalent to the funding currently provided to operate the Banneker-Douglass Museum (approximately \$600,000 annually).

Thus, general fund expenditures increase by \$484,503 in fiscal 2016, which accounts for the bill's October 1, 2015 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one-half of a grant administrator to administer the program and grant funding. It includes a salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Position	0.5
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$29,998
Grants	450,000
Equipment/Operating Expenses	<u>4,505</u>
<b>Total FY 2016 State Expenditures</b>	<b>\$484,503</b>

Future year expenditures reflect a full salary with annual increases and employee turnover as well as annual increases in ongoing operating expenses, including grant funding.

To the extent the commission implements a more ambitious grant program, costs increase to provide additional grants and to hire additional staff as needed.

**Additional Information:** House Bill 130 of 2015 seeks to reestablish and make permanent the African American Heritage Preservation Program.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** SB 525 of 2014 passed the Senate and received a hearing in the House Health and Government Operations Committee, but no further action was taken. Its cross file, HB 732, received a hearing in the Health and Government Operations Committee, but no further action was taken.

**Cross File:** HB 94 (Delegate B. Wilson) - Health and Government Operations.

**Information Source(s):** Governor's Office, Maryland Department of Planning, Department of Housing and Community Development, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 3, 2015  
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