

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 648 (Senators Muse and Waugh)
 Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Task Force to Study the Effect of the Drug Ritalin on School Children

This bill establishes the Task Force to Study the Effect of the Drug Ritalin on School Children. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) must provide staff for the task force. By December 31, 2015, the task force must conduct two public hearings in the State. By December 31, 2016, the task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2015, and terminates June 30, 2017.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$25,000 in FY 2016 and \$13,100 in FY 2017 for MSDE to hire a half-time contractual education specialist to support the task force, conduct two public hearings, and produce the required report. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	25,000	13,100	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$25,000)	(\$13,100)	\$0	\$0	\$0

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

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The 16-member task force includes 2 members of the Senate and 2 members of the House of Delegates. The Governor must designate the chair of the task force. A member of the task force may not receive compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for standard travel expenses.

The task force must study the extent to which the recommendations of the Task Force to Study the Abuses of Methylphenidate and Other Drugs on School Children have been implemented. In addition, the task force must study specified topics related to the use and impact of Ritalin in children.

The task force must make recommendations regarding (1) the process used by local school systems to recommend an evaluation of a child for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); (2) the use of treatment plans for ADHD other than Ritalin for children in public schools, including nonpharmacological interventions; (3) the impact of the use of Ritalin for children in this State on local school systems and the public health system; and (4) the use of Ritalin for children in public schools.

Current Law/Background: Ritalin is one of the brand names for methylphenidate, a drug used to treat ADHD, postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome, and narcolepsy. It was first licensed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 1955 for treating what was then known as hyperactivity. Prescribed to patients beginning in 1960, the drug became heavily prescribed in the 1990s, when the diagnosis of ADHD itself became more widely accepted. The side effects reported with Ritalin include heart-related problems and psychiatric problems, including new psychotic symptoms or new manic symptoms in children and teenagers.

ADHD is a disorder characterized by behavior and attention difficulties that are exhibited in multiple settings, but most prominently in the classroom. It begins in childhood and is identified by difficulty in paying attention, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness.

In 1997, the General Assembly established the Task Force to Study the Uses of Methylphenidate and Other Drugs on School Children (Chapter 504). The task force submitted its final report in March 1999. The task force made several recommendations for the educational and medical communities and for the support of families. Chapter 84 of 2000 established an Advisory Council on ADHD that ended in 2003.

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures increase by \$25,012 in fiscal 2016 for MSDE to hire a half-time contractual education specialist to support the task force, conduct two public hearings, and producing the required report. This estimate assumes an October 1, 2015 start date, following a 90-day start-up delay, a half-time salary, fringe benefits, and ongoing expenses.

Contractual Position	0.5
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$20,507
Operating Expenses	<u>4,505</u>
Total FY 2016 State Expenditures	\$25,012

Future year expenditures reflect elimination of the half-time position on December 31, 2016, upon the completion of the required report.

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) reports that it needs to hire a 1/5 time program manager at a cost of approximately \$20,000 annually to attend task force meetings. The Department of Legislative Services advises that DHMH can assign a current staff member to attend task force meetings and that DHMH is not required to support the task force.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Department of Legislative Services

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min/rhh

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