

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1018 (Prince George's County Delegation)
Health and Government Operations

**Prince George's County - Closures or Partial Closures of Hospitals - Board of
Health Approval
PG 406-16**

This emergency bill prohibits a person from closing or partially closing a hospital in Prince George's County that receives State and county funding unless (1) the person notifies the Prince George's County Board of Health at least 90 days prior to the proposed date of closure or partial closure and (2) the board of health approves the closure or partial closure. The bill specifies that these requirements are in addition to any existing requirements for the closure or partial closure of a hospital.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: State finances are not materially affected.

Local Effect: Prince George's County can implement the bill's requirements within existing budgeted resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: In deciding whether to approve the closure or partial closure of a hospital, the board of health must (1) hold a public hearing at a location within five miles of the hospital within 30 days of receiving notice of the proposed closure or partial closure; (2) consider the oral and written testimony submitted to the board of health; and (3) consider whether the sale or other transfer of the hospital to another person is a viable alternative.

Within 30 days of the public hearing, the board of health must provide written notice of its decision to the person proposing to close or partially close the hospital and to the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC). Failure of the board of health to hold a hearing or provide written notice may not be deemed an approval of the proposed closure or partial closure of a hospital.

Current Law: A certificate of need is not required to close any health care facility or part of a health care facility in the State if notice of the proposed closure is filed with MHCC at least 45 days prior to closure or partial closure. A hospital located in a county with fewer than three hospitals must also hold a public informational hearing in the county where the hospital is located within 30 days after submitting notice of intent to close or partially close.

Background: According to MHCC, to the extent “partial closure” includes closure of an acute care service line or delicensure of beds, there have been only seven partial closures in Maryland since 2000 and no closures. Laurel Regional Hospital, located in Prince George’s County, closed its adolescent psychiatric service in 2005 and delicensed 16 beds in 2015. In 2015, Dimensions Healthcare System, which manages Laurel Regional Hospital, announced plans to transition the hospital to an ambulatory care center with limited inpatient beds and services by 2018.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Prince George’s County, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, *The Baltimore Sun*, Department of Legislative Services

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mel/ljm

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