

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 308 (Senator Lam)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Environment - Statewide Green Business Certification Program

This bill requires the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to establish and administer a statewide green business certification program. The certification program must (1) recognize businesses that operate in a manner that reduces their environmental footprint and (2) provide consumers with a way to identify businesses that have been certified as green businesses. MDE must update and enhance the program established under the bill in consultation with the Montgomery County Green Business Certification Program. MDE may adopt implementing regulations. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. Because MDE is already fulfilling the bill's requirements, as discussed below, there is no impact on State finances or operations.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local government operations or finances. MDE has already consulted with Montgomery County, as discussed below.

Small Business Effect: Minimal or none, since MDE already supports a Green Registry program that is consistent with the intent of the bill.

Analysis

Current Law: None relevant.

State Fiscal Effect: Because MDE is already fulfilling the bill’s requirements, there is no impact on State finances or operations. MDE administers the Maryland Green Registry, a free, voluntary program that offers tips and resources to help businesses and other organizations set and meet their own goals on the path to sustainability. To become a member in MDE’s program, a facility must (1) download the member profile form; (2) share information on at least five environmental practices in place at the businesses’ facility; and (3) provide a measurable result related to at least one of these practices. In calendar 2020, MDE worked with Montgomery County to update its Green Registry to acknowledge environmental certification programs. Businesses that participate in MDE’s Green Registry and qualify are able to include green certifications on their websites. Additionally, in 2021, MDE launched a program called Certification Central that lists member-reported certifications in one place, making this information easier to access for consumers and other businesses.

Montgomery County’s [Green Business Certification Program](#) is a voluntary recognition program designed to encourage businesses and other organizations to take steps that reduce their ecological footprint.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 61 of 2021 passed the House and received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken. HB 896 of 2020, as amended, passed the House and was referred to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Montgomery County; Maryland Department of the Environment; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 24, 2022
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