

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Enrolled - Revised

Senate Bill 732

(Chair, Finance Committee)(By Request - Departmental -
Disabilities)

Finance

Health and Government Operations

**Department of Disabilities - State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and
Maryland Commission on Disabilities - Alterations**

This departmental bill transfers the State Coordinator for Autism Strategy from the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives (GOCI) to the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) and specifies that MDOD (rather than GOCI) must provide staff for the Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs. Uncodified language requires the Governor, as of July 1, 2023, to transfer two positions and the associated general funds for the State Coordinator for Autism Strategy from the Executive Department to MDOD. The bill also expands the membership of the Maryland Commission on Disabilities to include an individual with a traumatic brain injury (TBI). **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill specifies that the coordinator position is in MDOD rather than GOCI and requires the Governor to transfer two positions and the associated general funds from GOCI to MDOD in FY 2024. Thus, there is no net impact on State expenditures. Adding a member to the commission does not substantively change State activities or operations. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: MDOD has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small businesses. The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment. (The attached assessment does not reflect amendments to the bill.)

Analysis

Current Law:

State Coordinator for Autism Strategy

Chapter 341 of 2020 established a State Coordinator for Autism Strategy in MDOD to (1) identify and evaluate existing services for individuals with autism and their families; (2) develop a strategic plan for addressing autism-related needs; (3) identify national benchmarks and other performance measures; and (4) monitor and evaluate the implementation of the strategic plan and the success of the State in addressing autism-related needs.

Chapter 389 of 2021 moved the coordinator position from MDOD to GOCI and required the Governor, beginning in fiscal 2023, to include in the annual budget bill an appropriation to fund the coordinator position and the Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs. Chapter 627 of 2022 requires the Governor, beginning in fiscal 2024, to include in the annual budget bill an amount sufficient to fund one support staff position for the coordinator.

Maryland Commission on Disabilities

The Maryland Commission on Disabilities, the advisory body for MDOD, is tasked with unifying and improving service delivery to people with disabilities. The commission also plays an instrumental role in developing the State Disabilities Plan, a comprehensive multi-year strategic plan that sets performance goals for all agencies that serve people with disabilities in Maryland.

The 23-member commission includes 19 members appointed by the Governor, representatives from the Maryland Senate and House of Delegates, the State Coordinator for Autism Strategy, and a representative of the Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay. A majority of the members of the commission must be individuals with disabilities. Members serve three-year, staggered terms. Failure to attend at least 50% of the regularly scheduled meetings during any 12-month period may be considered a resignation. A commission member may not receive compensation but, if the Secretary of Disabilities approves, is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under standard State travel regulations. The commission must meet at least twice per year in meetings open to the public.

State Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board

The State Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board in the Maryland Department of Health is charged with (1) investigating the needs of citizens with TBI; (2) identifying gaps in services to citizens with TBI; (3) facilitating collaboration among State agencies serving individuals with TBI; (4) facilitating collaboration among organizations and entities serving individuals with TBI; (5) encouraging and facilitating community participation in program implementation; and (6) issuing an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly summarizing the board's actions and containing specified recommendations.

State Expenditures: The bill specifies that the coordinator position is in MDOD rather than GOCI and requires the Governor, as of July 1, 2023, to transfer two positions and the associated general funds for the coordinator from the Executive Department to MDOD. The fiscal 2024 budget as passed by the General Assembly includes one position and general funds totaling \$131,275 for the coordinator position. Thus, general fund expenditures for MDOD increase by at least \$131,275 (and correspondingly decrease for GOCI) in fiscal 2024.

Additional Comments: MDOD advises that adding a member with a TBI to the commission is intended to balance the State government disability and TBI constituent representation. The addition of an individual with a TBI will add additional viewpoints to the commission as TBI can overlap with other underrepresented groups such as the military, substance abuse, and domestic violence populations.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Disabilities; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History:
km/jc

First Reader - February 22, 2023
Third Reader - March 27, 2023
Revised - Amendment(s) - March 27, 2023
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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Department of Disabilities – State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Maryland Commission on Disabilities – Alterations

BILL NUMBER: SB 732

PREPARED BY: Elizabeth Hall, Director of Interagency Affairs

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS

OR

WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

The proposed legislation, Department of Disabilities – Maryland Commission on Disabilities – Membership will have no economic impact on Maryland small businesses.