



Maryland

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET
AND MANAGEMENT

LARRY HOGAN
Governor

DAVID R. BRINKLEY
Secretary

BOYD K. RUTHERFORD
Lieutenant Governor

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

SENATE BILL 831 Education Support Professionals - Workgroup and Bonus (Zucker)

STATEMENT OF INFORMATION

DATE: March 9, 2022

COMMITTEE: Senate Budget & Taxation and Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SUMMARY OF BILL: SB 831 establishes the Workgroup to Study the Wages of Education Support Professionals to determine the percentage of education support professional in the State earn a living wage and study wage increases for education support professional to attract and retain skilled workers; mandates a \$500 bonus for each education support professional in FY 2023 and FY 2024; and mandates a \$1,000 bonus for each non-certified education support professional in FY 2024, if the FY 2023 Budget does not contain a \$500 bonus for these employees.

EXPLANATION: The Department of Budget and Management's focus is not on the underlying policy proposal being advanced by the legislation, but rather on the estimated expenditure of \$39 million between FY 2023 and FY 2024. No funding is in the FY 2023 Budget allowance for this purpose.

DBM has the responsibility of submitting a balanced budget to the General Assembly annually, which will require spending allocations for FY 2024 to be within the official revenues estimates approved by the Board of Revenue Estimates in December 2022.

Changes to the Maryland Constitution in 2020 provide the General Assembly with additional budgetary authority, beginning in the 2023 Session, to realign total spending by increasing and adding items to appropriations in the budget submitted by the Governor. The legislature's new budgetary power diminishes, if not negates, the need for mandated appropriation bills.

Fully funding the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Kirwan) will require fiscal discipline in the years ahead, if the State is to maintain the current projected structural budget surpluses. Mandated spending increases need to be reevaluated within the context of this education funding priority and the Governor's tax relief proposals.

Economic conditions remain precarious as a result of COVID-19. High rates of inflation and workforce shortages may be short lived or persist, thereby impacting the Maryland economy. While current budget forecasts project structural surpluses, the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to present a significant budgetary vulnerability. The Department continues to urge the General Assembly to focus on maintaining the structural budget surplus.

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