

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 874 (Delegates Rosenberg and Simmons)
Health and Government Operations and
Judiciary

**Task Force to Study Access of Individuals with Mental Illness to Regulated
Firearms - Extension**

This bill extends by 11 months – from December 31, 2012, to December 1, 2013 – the date by which the Task Force to Study Access of Individuals with Mental Illness to Regulated Firearms is required to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly. The bill also extends by 13 months – from May 31, 2013, to June 30, 2014 – the termination date of the task force.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2013.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any expense reimbursements for task force members and staffing costs for the Governor’s Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP) continue to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: Chapter 131 of 2012 (HB 618) established a Task Force to Study Access of Individuals with Mental Illness to Regulated Firearms and specified three areas of concern to consider. The task force is staffed by GOCCP and filed its report of findings and recommendations on December 31, 2012. The task force established three workgroups to study each area of concern:

- The first workgroup studied the adequacy of State laws and policies relating to the access of law enforcement officers to mental health records and whether, and to what extent, the State should expand access of law enforcement officers to certain mental health records.
- The second workgroup studied whether existing statutory and regulatory provisions adequately protect the public as well as the civil rights of individuals with mental illness.
- The third workgroup studied the adequacy of State laws and policies relating to the access of individuals with a history of mental illness to all regulated firearms.

The task force report has seven findings, with nine recommendations. The recommendations include the need for additional research, additional mandated reporting by mental health professionals and law enforcement, mandatory firearm seizures under certain circumstances, additional training for law enforcement personnel and mental health professionals, expansion of crisis intervention teams, changes in funding allocations for continuing education and local jurisdictions, and the establishment of a process for full restoration of firearms possession and purchasing rights in accordance with specified federal standards. The detailed findings and recommendations of the task force are contained in the full task force report which can be found online at: <http://www.goccp.maryland.gov/legislation/guns-mental-illness-task-force.php>.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 27, 2013
mc/ljm

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