Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 809 (Senator King)
Finance

Supporting Our Caregiver Infrastructure Program - Feasibility Study

This bill requires the Office of the Comptroller, with assistance from the Department of Human Services (DHS), to study and make recommendations on the feasibility of establishing and operating a Supporting Our Caregiver Infrastructure Program to provide universal monthly payments to a caregiver for each dependent for whom a caregiver provides care. The Comptroller must examine the economic impact on the State and local economies, including potential increased labor force participation; enhanced tax revenues; potential decreased participation in public benefits programs in the State; and the overall economic vitality of the State. By July 1, 2027, the Office of the Comptroller must submit a final report of its findings, conclusions, and recommendations to specified committees of the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026, and terminates June 30, 2028.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill's requirements can be handled with existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: "Qualified family member" means an individual who requires assistance with one or more daily living activities, as certified by a licensed physician, physician assistant, or a registered nurse practitioner, and (1) is at least 60 years old and is cared for by an adult relative or informal caregiver who it at least 18 years old; (2) has Alzheimer's disease or a related disorder and is cared for by an adult relative or informal caregiver who is at least 18 years old; (3) is a child with developmental or functional disabilities and is

cared for by a parent, grandparent, or other relative; or (4) is an adult with developmental or functional disabilities and is cared for by a parent, grandparent, or other relative.

DHS must assist the Comptroller in conducting the study by (1) identifying available and potential federal, State, and local funding sources for the program; (2) identifying the administrative needs, administrative costs, and operating costs associated with the program; (3) exploring appropriate amounts for caregiver stipends that maximize the benefit to the State economy and minimize the fiscal impact on the State budget; (4) consulting with the Maryland Department of Aging (MDOA), the Maryland Department of Health, and local agencies on aging and disabilities, including a unit of local government or a private, nonprofit corporation.

Current Law: The Comptroller of Maryland is the State's chief fiscal officer and is responsible for collecting tax revenue and enforcing compliance with the State's tax laws.

Caregiver Expense Grant Program

Chapter 161 of 2024 established a Caregiver Expense Grant Program in MDOA to award grants for qualified expenses (including adult day care, specialized transportation, legal or financial services, or assistive care technology, among other things) paid or incurred by an individual who provides care to a qualified family member and whose federal adjusted gross income does not exceed a specified amount.

Under the program, a "qualified family member" is an individual who requires assistance with one or more daily living activities, as certified by a licensed physician, physician assistant, or registered nurse practitioner, and (1) is at least 60 years old or has Alzheimer's Disease or a related disorder and is cared for by an adult relative or informal caregiver who is at least 18 years old or (2) is a child or an adult with developmental or functional disabilities and is cared for by a parent, grandparent, or other relative that is at least 55 years old.

Family Caregiver Assistance Program

Chapter 224 of 2006 established the Family Caregiver Assistance Program in MDOA. Under the program, a maximum grant of $500 per year can be provided to eligible individuals who provide long-term care to certain individuals. Grants may be used to defray the cost of goods and services required to provide long-term care, including durable medical equipment, medical bills, medical supplies, prescription or over-the-counter medications, home repairs or modifications, and respite care. Eligible individuals must provide care to an individual age 18 or older who is a spouse, parent, stepparent, grandparent, child, stepchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, son-, daughter-, mother-, or father-in-law.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: HB 1280 (Delegate Wims, *et al.*) - Health.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Aging; Comptroller's Office; Maryland Department of Health; Department of Human Services; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 5, 2026
js/jc

Analysis by: Amberly E. Holcomb

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510