

SB 271 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Action Date: 04/08/21

Action: Do pass with amendments and requesting referral to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Engrossed.)

Vote: 4-1-0-0

Yeas: 4 - Anderson, Golden, Jama, Patterson

Nays: 1 - Linthicum

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Devin Edwards, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 4/6, 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Appropriates \$5,000,000 from General Fund to Department of Justice (DOJ) beginning July 1, 2021 to assist survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault with housing needs. Requires DOJ to report to Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2022. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Allowable and intended uses of spending
- Geographic reach of spending
- Estimated number of beneficiaries from appropriation
- Funding for new housing units
- Role of housing navigators
- Data on efficacy of housing services programs
- How grantees access and deploy grant funds

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

The Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division (CVSSD) of the Department of Justice (DOJ) provides financial support to survivors, advocates for survivors' rights in the justice system, and funds local programs in District Attorneys Offices that serve survivors. District Attorneys Offices retain trained advocates on staff to help survivors understand the legal process and access community resources. COVID-19 has strained existing supports for survivors by limiting shelter availability, decreasing program volunteer hours, and reducing trainings for recipients of state grants.

Senate Bill 271 A appropriates \$5,000,000 from the General Fund to the Department of Justice (DOJ) for the biennium beginning July 1, 2021 to assist domestic violence and sexual assault survivors with housing needs. The measure also requires DOJ to report expenditures to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2022.