



University of Baltimore Law Forum

Volume 29
Number 2 *Spring/Summer* 1999

Article 34

1999

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Recommended Citation

Bolea, Brent (1999) "Recent Developments: House Bill 751: Cigarette Restitution Fund," *University of Baltimore Law Forum*: Vol. 29 : No. 2 , Article 34.

Available at: <http://scholarworks.law.ubalt.edu/lf/vol29/iss2/34>

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HOUSE BILL 751: CIGARETTE RESTITUTION FUND

By Brent Bolea

On July 1, 1999, House Bill 751 took effect. The Cigarette Restitution Fund will derive revenue from tobacco settlements. House Bill 751 designates purposes for which such revenues should be expended. For example, disbursements are to be utilized for such things as campaigns to decrease tobacco use and programs to find alternative crops for land now used by Maryland tobacco farmers. The Bill also allocates revenues towards the enforcement of laws regarding tobacco sales, primary health care in rural areas, and the prevention, treatment, and research concerning cancer, heart disease, and lung disease.

Finally, House Bill 751 established certain responsibilities for the Governor. For instance, the Governor must develop mission statements for each program receiving fund revenues and report annually by program. The Governor is also required by the Bill to report as to the types public benefits of projects which are to be funded by tobacco settlement revenues.