



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 2225

PRINTER'S NO. 2965

PRIME SPONSOR: Pashinski

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25
General Fund	\$0	\$131,000

SUMMARY: HB 2225 PN 2965 establishes the Rural Population Revitalization Commission. This legislation will take effect in 180 days.

ANALYSIS: This legislation amends the Rural Pennsylvania Revitalization Act (Act 16 of 1987) by creating a new Chapter 4 to establish the Rural Pennsylvania Revitalization Commission.

Powers and Duties of the Commission

The Rural Population Revitalization Commission:

- Shall issue biennial reports on population change in rural areas, at minimum including:
 - Increasing participation in the Federal decennial census
 - Attracting and retaining residents in rural Pennsylvania
 - Education and career opportunities
 - Access to health care and social services
 - Issues facing rural Pennsylvania
 - Grant awards and tax credit opportunities for rural residents
 - Statutory and regulatory costs and impacts on rural governments, businesses, and communities
- Additional powers and duties
 - Convene meetings, make findings, and recommendations to address and mitigate rural population decline
 - Hold public hearings
 - Review rural development strategies
 - Create and maintain a database on rural demographic conditions and trends
 - Determine fiscal impact of rural population changes on local governments

Commission Members

- Commission shall be composed of 17 members:
 - Three individuals appointed by the Governor, including one from PASSHE
 - Two Senators appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate
 - Two House Members appointed by the Speaker of the House, one from each party
 - Director of the Center for Rural Pennsylvania or designee
 - A person selected by stakeholder group representing the interest of legal immigrants in rural communities
 - A representative from the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health
 - A young adult selected from FFA
 - A representative from the County Commissioners Association who holds office in rural county
 - A representative from the County Commissioners Association of PA's Human Services Committee
 - A representative from the PA School Board's Associations from a rural school district
 - A member of the PA Chamber who resides in or operates a rural business
 - The Executive Director or designee of the Rural Development Council

- A certified community health worker, selected by PA Community Health Worker Collaborative

- Members shall serve without compensation, except for reasonable expenses related to their duties

Fund

The Rural Population Revitalization Fund was created to carry out provisions of the new Chapter 4 established under this legislation and existing Chapter 5 (relating to Rural Education Programs).

FISCAL IMPACT: The enactment of this legislation could have a fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds, specifically the General Fund. To determine the fiscal impact, we need to consider the Commission's make up, number of meetings per year, the reimbursement rates related to travel and lodging, and the possible need for additional personnel by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania.

First, the Rural Population Revitalization Commission would consist of 17 appointees. Regarding reimbursement costs, the total number of appointees can be divided into two groups. One group, consisting of appointees who are state or legislative members (11) and second group consisting of members (6) appointed by stakeholder groups.

For state members travel and lodging costs would be absorbed by their respective state agency. Similarly, for legislative members, their costs would be absorbed by their respective caucuses.

Costs related to the second group, six (6) non-governmental appointees, would have a fiscal impact. As such we need to consider the following components:

- Reimbursement per mile - \$0.67 with assumed Average Distance of 200 miles traveled
- Lodging cost per meeting - \$98
- Subsistence cost per day - \$59
- Number of meetings/events - four meetings per year, plus two off-site legislative hearings

Utilizing the reimbursement rates, the number of directors to which such rates apply, and the number of meetings per year, it is estimated that the annual costs for the Center for Rural Pennsylvania would be less than \$12,000 per fiscal year.

Additionally, we also have to consider that the Center for Rural Pennsylvania needs to produce a biennial report and provide staffing as needed for the newly created Commission. As such, it is likely that it needs to hire one Policy Analyst to fulfill those responsibilities. Annual costs for one Policy Analyst would total approximately \$119,000, including salary and benefits.

Lastly, there could be a fiscal impact if any funds were appropriated by the General Assembly, for the purpose of funding a Commission administered grant program.

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House Appropriations Committee (D)

DATE: May 8, 2024

Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.