



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

SENATE BILL NO. 361

PRINTERS NO. 1598

PRIME SPONSOR: Robbins

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13
General Fund	\$0	\$0

SUMMARY: Amends the Vital Statistics Law of 1953 allowing for public access to certain birth or death certificates. The effective date is in 60 days.

ANALYSIS: Senate Bill 361 would allow that, when 105 years has elapsed after the date of birth or 50 years after the date of death, these birth/ death records become public records and the records are to be maintained by the State Archives to ensure proper safekeeping. Currently, as of 1906, the Division of Vital Records maintains records of births and deaths that have occurred in the state; these records are not open to the public. Vital Records issues certified copies of birth/ death certificates to certain eligible individuals (particularly, family members).

FISCAL IMPACT: Enactment of this legislation would have no adverse fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds. The PA Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) has a license agreement with Ancestry.com to digitize and index records at no cost to the state; PHMC anticipates Ancestry.com would make digitization of these birth/ death records a high priority; once digitized, the records would become available to the public in the search room of the State Archives as well as to subscribers to Ancestry.com services; and after 3 years, the records would also become available on the PHMC website.

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House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: November 22, 2011

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