



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 1516

PRINTERS NO. 2124

PRIME SPONSOR: Causer

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20
General Fund; Agriculture Rapid Response Disaster Readiness Account	\$0	See Fiscal Impact

SUMMARY: House Bill 1516, Printer's Number 2124, establishes the Agriculture Rapid Response Disaster Readiness Account for the Department of Agriculture.

ANALYSIS: This bill amends Title 3 (Agriculture) by creating a new chapter to establish the Agriculture Rapid Response Disaster Readiness Account, a restricted account within the department to provide emergency money for training, equipment and other resources necessary for rapid responses to transmissible diseases, plant pests, plant diseases, controlled and noxious weeds, foodborne illnesses and natural and other disasters affecting agriculture which pose an immediate danger to public or animal health, food safety or economic well-being in the Commonwealth.

The Department of Agriculture shall administer the provisions and allocate money in accordance with this chapter. It may also develop training programs and training program requirements. Any contracts awarded under this program shall be subject to the Commonwealth Procurement Code.

Purposes for which money from the account may be used by the department shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- to mitigate, contain, control, eradicate, prevent or limit the spread of transmissible diseases, hazardous substance contamination, plant pests, invasive species, plant diseases, noxious weeds, controlled plants, and foodborne illness - if the secretary determines any pose an immediate danger to public or animal health, food safety or economic well-being;
- to assist in providing transportation of livestock feed from a commercial feed establishment in the event of a disaster declaration issued by the Governor that includes the department;
- to make grants for and acquire data for identified issues in the bill - no more than \$100,000 may be used for this purpose in a year;
- to provide additional financial assistance as may be requested in a declaration of disaster issued by the Governor that includes the department; and
- to provide up to \$250,000 annually to animal response teams recognized and approved by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency...consistent with standards and guidelines established by the agency in conjunction with the department.

The department shall require a person receiving money to keep and provide records upon request. The records shall include the name and address of the person, evidence of the eligible disaster for which the money was received and a copy of each invoice and expenditure to account for the expenditure of money received.

The department shall also keep a record of all expenditures from the account, which shall include the date, eligible purpose of the expenditure and any eligible entity that may have received the funding. The General Assembly may request a report, including the required records, from the department on a fiscal year basis or as the General Assembly believes necessary. The department may cooperate and enter into agreements with the appropriate regulatory agencies of the Federal Government and any other Commonwealth agency in furtherance of this chapter.

The Agriculture Rapid Response Disaster Readiness Account is established as a special nonlapsing account in the State Treasury for the department to meet the activities and requirements of this chapter. All money allocated to or supplements to the account and the interest collected on money and supplements shall be paid into the account. Supplements to the account may include state and federal money appropriated to the department, gifts and contributions, and money received from other governmental agencies through an interagency agreement or memorandum of understanding.

An administrative action may not prevent the deposit of money into the account in the fiscal year in which the money is received. The money shall only be used for the purposes authorized and shall not be transferred or diverted to any other purpose by administrative action. Distribution of account money shall be made available beginning with fiscal year 2019-2020 and thereafter. The department shall not be liable or obligated to continue funding if money is not available.

This legislation would take effect in 60 days upon enactment.

FISCAL IMPACT: Enactment of this legislation will have no adverse impact on Commonwealth funds. This program is part of the proposed Pennsylvania Farm Bill package for FY2019-20 and any resulting grants and funding are contingent upon available funds being appropriated for this program.

It should be noted that the department has received prior funding to address emerging threats to Pennsylvania agriculture, such as a \$2 million appropriation in FY2016-17 to address Avian Flu Preparedness and Response which remains available for such activities. The department also received \$3 million for its FY2018-19 Spotted Lanternfly Control appropriation.

The bill would establish the Agriculture Rapid Response Disaster Readiness Account to continue this work, address the requirements of this chapter and receive any state and federal money appropriated to the department, gifts and contributions, and money received from other governmental agencies through an interagency agreement or memorandum of understanding. It also directs up to \$250,000 annually to animal response teams recognized and approved by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency in conjunction with the department.

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House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: June 17, 2019

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