



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

SENATE BILL NO. 144

PRINTERS NO. 927

PRIME SPONSOR: Martin

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20
General Fund	\$0	\$300,000

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 144 establishes the Keystone Telepresence Education Grant Program in the Public School Code. It would take effect in 90 days.

ANALYSIS:

Senate Bill 144 adds a new article to the Public School Code which establishes the Keystone Telepresence Education Grant Program for the purpose of awarding grants to intermediate units for the purchase of telepresence equipment and related support services for the educational support of homebound students. The grants will enable intermediate units to buy equipment that will allow students who are homebound due to a serious medical condition to participate in real time with the students in their classroom.

The Department of Education (PDE) must develop guidelines for the purchase of telepresence equipment and services related to the utilization of the equipment through the program, including department-approved telepresence equipment manufacturers. The Department will then determine the form and manner in which an application for a grant may be filed and provide notice of the program to intermediate units. The Department must also make grant applications available to all intermediate units along with details relating to the application process and adopt guidelines for the approval of grant applications.

All intermediate units are eligible for a grant and may apply by submitting one annual application to the Department. The Secretary of Education will then determine the amount to award to an intermediate unit in accordance with the guidelines of the program. No intermediate unit may receive an annual grant allocation that exceeds 10% of the funds available under the program. In order to apply for a grant, an intermediate unit must develop an internal policy for the use of telepresence equipment and related support services.

An intermediate unit which is awarded a grant must use it to purchase telepresence equipment and make that equipment available, free of charge, to public and nonpublic schools within the intermediate unit for the educational needs of homebound students. A grant may be used, in part, to secure technical support, mechanical support and training related to the use of the

telepresence equipment. An intermediate unit which is awarded a grant must submit to PDE a report detailing all expenditures related to the use of the grant.

FISCAL IMPACT:

To award grants under the program, PDE must use up to \$300,000 annually of undistributed funds not expended, encumbered or committed from appropriations for grants and subsidies made to the department to award grants. The funds shall be transferred by the Secretary of the Budget to a restricted account as necessary to award grants and, when transferred, are appropriated to carry out the provisions of this article.

PREPARED BY: Jeff Miller
House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: June 20, 2019

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