



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 301

PRINTER'S NO. 1035

PRIME SPONSOR: Harkins

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24
General Fund	\$0	\$0

SUMMARY:

House Bill 301 amends the Public School Code to update outdated terminology, and it directs \$1 million of the \$62.502 million 2022-2023 appropriation for Pennsylvania Chartered Schools for Deaf and Blind Children to be used for capital-related costs and deferred maintenance.

ANALYSIS:

House Bill 301 replaces terms with negative connotations with modern, respectful language, including:

- Using “physical or intellectual disabilities” in place of terms such as “physically and mentally handicapped,” “mentally retarded,” and “handicapped and institutionalized”
- Replacing “truant schools” with “alternative education schools”
- Changing “defects” and “defectives” to “impairments”
- Changing deaf and blind to “hearing impaired or visually impaired”
- Replacing “other bad conduct” with “behaviors which impede the learning of self or others”
- Changing “emotional disturbance” to “emotional disability”
- Replacing “exceptional children” with “children with disabilities”
- Using “brain injury” in place of “brain damaged”
- Replacing “financially handicapped” with “financially burdened”

This portion of the act would take effect in 60 days.

Additionally, House Bill 301 adds a new paragraph to Section 1376.1 of the Public School Code related to payments to the four Chartered Schools for the Education of the Deaf and the Blind. The new language provides that \$1 million from the amount appropriated for Pennsylvania Chartered Schools for Deaf and Blind Children for the 2022-2023 fiscal year shall be divided equally between the four chartered schools for capital-related costs and deferred maintenance. Relatedly, the bill repeals section 1723-F.1(5)(ii) of the Fiscal Code. Section 1723-F.1(5) contains the 2022-2023 budget implementation stipulations for money appropriated for Pennsylvania Chartered Schools for Deaf and Blind Children, but subparagraph (ii) erroneously referenced approved private schools instead of the four Chartered Schools for the deaf and blind. The appropriation parameters in Section 1376.1 and the related repeal take effect immediately and are both retroactive to July 1, 2022.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 301 would have no fiscal impact on commonwealth funds. The terminology updates do not change the underlying meaning of the impacted sections of the Public School Code, and the parameters around the appropriation for payments to Pennsylvania Chartered Schools for Deaf and Blind Children simply direct funds that have already been appropriated. Act 1A of 2022 provided a \$62.502 million appropriation for payments to Pennsylvania Chartered Schools for Deaf and Blind Children for the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

PREPARED BY: Sean Brandon, Senior Budget Analyst
House Appropriations Committee (D)

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