



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

SENATE BILL NO. 1018

PRINTER'S NO. 1275

PRIME SPONSOR: Kearney

COST / (SAVINGS)

| FUND | FY 2023/24 | FY 2024/25 |
|--------------|------------|-------------------|
| General Fund | \$0 | See Fiscal Impact |

SUMMARY:

This legislation allows the Department of Human Services to designate a person as a child advocate to accompany and provide services to children who are material witnesses in a proceeding before the department.

ANALYSIS:

Senate Bill 1018 Printer's Number 1275 amends Title 2 (Administrative Law and Procedure) by adding Subchapter E (Child victims and witnesses). The bill allows the Department of Human Services to designate one or more persons to act as a child advocate and to accompany and provide services on behalf of children who are involved in proceedings before the department as material witnesses. The legislation defines the services that may be provided and the qualifications necessary for the advocate.

The bill also allows for "alternative methods of testimony", which is defined as a procedural accommodation that will aid a child in providing testimony in a proceeding before the department. The legislation clarifies the situations in which alternative methods of testimony can be utilized, the process for petitioning for an alternative method of testimony, and the allowable accommodations.

This legislation would take effect in 60 days upon enactment.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Enactment of this legislation will have an indeterminate effect on Commonwealth funds. According to the Department of Human Services, the designation of child advocates will likely have a cost, which would be a function of the number of required advocates.

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House Appropriations Committee (D)

DATE: June 3, 2024

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