

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** Senate Bill 1061

**PRINTER'S NO.** 1197

**AMOUNT**

\$1,092,000

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

May 10, 2011

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Senator Corman

**HISTORY OF BILL**

Referred to APPROPRIATIONS, May 10, 2011

Reported as committed, May 23, 2011

First consideration, May 23, 2011

**DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL**

Senate Bill 1061 appropriates \$1,092,000 from a restricted revenue account within the General Fund to the Office of Small Business Advocate ("OSBA") in the Department of Community and Economic Development ("DCED").

The OSBA is administratively included within the Department of Community and Economic Development. However, the Small Business Advocate Act specifically provides that the Secretary of DCED is not in any way responsible for the policies, procedures, or other substantive matters developed by the OSBA to carry out its duties under the act.

The OSBA is charged with representing the interests of small business consumers of utility services in proceedings before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission ("PUC") and the comparable federal regulatory agencies and in court. The OSBA is funded for its utility regulatory functions by assessments levied by the PUC on the public utilities subject to its jurisdiction. No General Fund revenues are used to support the OSBA's operations.

In 1993, the OSBA was assigned additional responsibilities involving the administration of Pennsylvania's workers' compensation system. The costs incurred by the OSBA in discharging those duties are paid from assessments made by the Insurance Department against the insurance companies that write workers' compensation insurance policies in Pennsylvania.

Senate Bill 1061 reflects the Governor's recommended FY 2011-12 budget of \$1,092,000 for the OSBA. This is a \$31,000 increase (2.9%) over the FY 2010-11 appropriation of \$1,061,000.

This act shall take effect July 1, 2011, or immediately, whichever is later.