

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** House Bill 492

**PRINTER'S NO.** 1424

**AMOUNT**

No Fiscal Impact

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

March 11, 2013

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Senator Vereb

**HISTORY OF BILL**

Referred to JUDICIARY, March 11, 2013  
Reported as committed, March 12, 2013  
First consideration, March 12, 2013  
Laid on the table, March 12, 2013  
Removed from table, March 13, 2013  
Second consideration, March 18, 2013  
Re-committed to APPROPRIATIONS, March 18, 2013  
Re-reported as committed, March 19, 2013  
Third consideration and final passage, March 19, 2013 (194-0)  
(Remarks see House Journal Page ), March 19, 2013  
In the Senate  
Referred to JUDICIARY, April 3, 2013  
Reported as amended, April 9, 2013  
First consideration, April 9, 2013  
Re-referred to APPROPRIATIONS, May 8, 2013  
Re-reported as committed, June 3, 2013

**DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL**

Senate Bill 492 amends the act of November 24, 1998 (P.O. 882, No. 111), known as the Crime Victims Act, to permit a victim or victim's representative to provide testimony before the person or body making the parole release decision.

Specifically, this legislation amends §502 (b) of the Crime Victims Act to statutorily authorize victims or a victim's representative to provide testimony before the panel or majority of those members of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole charged with making the parole release decision. The legislation provides that such testimony may be provided by conference call as an alternative to appearing in person. Language clarifies that such testimony shall be confidential.

# **SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

## **FISCAL NOTE**

This legislation also mandates that records maintained by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, pertaining to victims and victim's representatives, be kept separate from other records. Furthermore, it specifies that victim records, including current address, telephone number and any other personal information of the victim and family members, shall be deemed confidential.

This act shall take effect September 1, 2013, or immediately, whichever is later.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Costs associated with the implementation of this legislation to the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (Board), Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and the Office of Victim Advocate (OVA) are expected to be minimal and capable of being absorbed within their existing fiscal resources. Additionally, the Board and OVA have stated that they are already planning to begin this process in September 2013 as legislation is not required for the Board to allow victims to testify in person.