

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 1226

PRINTER NO. 1963

AMOUNT

No Fiscal Impact

FUND

Veterans' Trust Fund

DATE INTRODUCED

May 4, 2016

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Vulakovich

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL

Senate Bill 1226 amends Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, to strengthen and align the Veterans' Trust Fund and the Veterans' Temporary Assistance Program.

Specifically, this legislation does the following:

- Provides for the eligibility of any charitable organization with a primary mission to serve Pennsylvania veterans to receive grant funding from the Veterans' Trust Fund (Fund);
- Provides for the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (Department) to expend funds from the Fund for Department-sponsored training and informational programs for Pennsylvania veterans with a limitation that no more than 10% of the balance in the Fund as of October 1 of the previous year may be used for this purpose;
- Adds a foundation, tax-exempt organization, estate and a veterans' service organization as sources that the Department may solicit and accept contributions;
- Amends the name of Chapter 85 from "Veterans' Emergency Assistance" to "Veterans' Temporary Assistance;"
- Amends the definition of "eligible veteran" to include a person who served in the armed forces of the United States including a reserve component and the National Guard, or a women's organization officially connected therewith, who:
 - 1) was discharged under the honorable conditions after a period of active duty as evidenced by a DD-Form 214, NGB-22 or other official documentation;
 - 2) died in service or was killed in action; or
 - 3) suffered a service-connected disability as certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

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- Adds new definitions for "Necessities of Living," "Need for temporary assistance," and "Program;"
- Amends the name of the "Veterans' Emergency Assistance Program" to the "Veterans' Temporary Assistance Program" (Program);
- Provides for certain eligibility requirements of veterans or surviving dependents of veterans to receive assistance under the Program;
- Provides that in no event shall veterans' temporary assistance payments exceed the established maximum assistance or the documented amount of need, whichever is less;
- Provides that no person shall be eligible to receive veterans' temporary assistance for more than the established maximum assistance in any 12-month period;
- Provides that the Department administer the funding under the Program and report periodically to the Pennsylvania State Veterans' Commission on the administration and status of the Program; and
- Provides for an appeal procedure to the Adjutant General for any person denied payments under the Program.

This act shall take effect July 1, 2016, or immediately, whichever is later.

FISCAL IMPACT:

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, the enactment of this legislation will have no fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds.