

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** Senate Bill 21

**PRINTER NO.** 1323

**AMOUNT**

No Fiscal Impact

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

June 29, 2017

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Senator Mensch

**DESCRIPTION**

Senate Bill 21 establishes the Employment First Act to provide competitive, integrated employment for individuals with a disability.

The legislation establishes the policy of Commonwealth agencies to be that competitive integrated employment is the first consideration and preferred outcome of publicly funded education, training, employment and related services, and long-term services and support for individuals with a disability.

It provides for the use of the designation of "employment champion", as utilized by the Department of Human Services, to providers who successfully support the placement of individuals in competitive, integrated employment. The Department of Labor and Industry will provide increased technical assistance to these employment champions to further support their employment services.

Commonwealth agencies are to make an effort to employ individuals with a disability in no less than seven percent of the overall Commonwealth workforce. Agencies will not be required to give preference in hiring to an individual with a disability. The legislation requires the Office of Administration to develop a framework for individuals to self-report a disability.

The Office of the Governor is required to develop a three-year plan, with input from Commonwealth agencies, regarding their policies and implementation for compliance with Employment First. The Office of the Governor is also required to submit an annual report to the General Assembly documenting continued improvement and compliance with Employment First.

The Governor's Cabinet for People with Disabilities is established and the following members are to be appointed to it by the Governor:

- Secretary of Human Services
- Secretary of Labor and Industry
- Secretary of Health
- Secretary of Education
- Secretary of Transportation
- Secretary of the Budget
- Secretary of Aging

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## FISCAL NOTE

- Secretary of Military and Veterans Affairs
- Secretary of State
- Secretary of Policy and Planning
- Secretary of Community and Economic Development
- Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
- Executive Director of the Civil Service Commission
- Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency
- Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council
- Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

The Cabinet shall review current regulations, policies and procedures and provide recommendations for changes to support and implement Employment First.

The Employment First Oversight Commission (Commission) is established consisting of 16 members, of whom at least 51% must be persons with disabilities. The General Assembly shall appoint 4 members, and the Governor shall appoint 12 members. Members shall be reimbursed for travel expenses. It also requires the Office of the Governor to provide staff and support to the Commission and to cover its expenses.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The Department of Labor and Industry believes that financial incentives and additional technical support for providers will be a reallocation of current funds and will not require any additional funds. There will be no fiscal impact to Commonwealth funds due to these changes.

The Office of Administration is tasked with developing a framework for individuals to self-report a disability. Any cost to fulfill this requirement is expected to be minimal and can be absorbed within the Office's current workload and budget.

The Office of the Governor is required to provide staff and support to the Commission and to cover its expenses. It is assumed that the staff time and support required to support the Commission will be minimal and can be absorbed by the current complement. The IRS mileage reimbursement rate for 2018 is \$0.545 per mile. Assuming that the Commission meets in Harrisburg for its 4 required meetings per year, and is made up of members from around the Commonwealth, the estimated travel expenses will be \$9,000 annually. This, along with the other minor support expenses of the Commission, can be absorbed within the Office of the Governor's current budget. Therefore there will be no fiscal impact to Commonwealth funds due to establishment of the Commission.