

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** Senate Bill 260

**PRINTER NO.** 240

**AMOUNT**

De Minimis Fiscal Impact

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

January 27, 2017

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Senator Ward

**DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL**

Senate Bill 260 amends the act of November 24, 1998 (P.L.882, No.111), known as the Crime Victims Act. The Crime Victims Act established the Victims' Services Advisory Committee (VSAC) within the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

Currently, the VSAC is comprised of the Secretaries of Aging, Corrections and Public Welfare, or their designees, and the Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police, the Victim Advocate and a District Attorney appointed by the Governor. In addition to these members, the Governor appoints nine (9) "general class" members.

The legislation does all of the following:

- Makes a technical change by replacing the "Secretary of Public Welfare" with "Secretary of Human Services;"
- Allows the Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police to send a designee to VSAC meetings as the agency Secretaries currently do;
- Replaces the nine (9) "general class" members with seventeen (17) appointees of the Governor that represent specific victims or entities. The new appointees shall be or represent one of the following:
  1. A direct victim of crime representing female victims;
  2. A direct victim of crime representing male victims;
  3. An area agency on aging;
  4. The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence;
  5. The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape;
  6. The Pennsylvania Chapter of Children's Advocacy Centers and Multidisciplinary Teams;
  7. The Pennsylvania Court Appointed Special Advocates Association;
  8. A county children and youth agency;
  9. A prosecution-based victim witness program;
  10. A victims' service or advocacy organization;
  11. The courts;
  12. County government;
  13. The executive director of the Juvenile Court Judges Commission;

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14. A children's advocacy center or victims' services agency working directly with children;
  15. Local law enforcement;
  16. A mental health treatment provider;
  17. A victims' services agency working directly with victims of human trafficking.
- Finally, the legislation requires that two (2) residents of the Commonwealth be appointed to the VSAC by the Chairman of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

The agency heads and Victim Advocate shall serve ex officio, while the remaining members of the VSAC shall serve for a four-year term and may be appointed for no more than one additional consecutive term.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The Crime Victims Act provides for staff support from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and the Office of Victims' Services to the VSAC in order to adequately perform their duties, and provides that committee members shall be subject to the same limitations and conditions as imposed on PCCD members under Section 2 of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and delinquency law (Act 1978-274). Section 2 establishes a compensation rate of \$75 for attendance at official meetings for certain members and provider for reimbursement of expenses.

The enactment of this legislation is expected to result in additional compensation and reimbursement costs of less than \$10,000 annually (assumes four meetings per year). Therefore, the additional costs associated with this legislation are considered de minimus.