

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** House Bill 856

**PRINTER NO.** 1333

**AMOUNT**

See Fiscal Impact

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

March 18, 2019

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Representative Boback

**DESCRIPTION**

House Bill 856 amends Title 67 (Public Welfare), reinstating permanent legal custodian and adoption assistance subsidies to children from 18 to 21 years of age. The provisions contained in House Bill 856 were previously codified in the Human Services Code through Act 80 of 2012, which was struck down by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in July 2018.

House Bill 856 promotes the placement in adoptive homes of children with disabilities or who are otherwise hard to place due to age, sibling relationships or ethnicity. The legislation also mandates counties conduct family finding efforts. This includes providing relative notification when a child is removed from a home, options for participation in care and placement and information on requirements to become a foster parent, legal custodian or adoptive parent.

This legislation is effective immediately, and Chapters 21 (Adoption Opportunities) and 31 (Family Finding and Kinship Care) are effective retroactive to July 18, 2018.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The passage of House Bill 856 is necessary for the services outlined in the legislation to remain eligible for federal Title IV-E funding. The Department of Human Services reports that approximately \$2.6 million in annual federal funding would be jeopardized if House Bill 856 is not enacted. Without these federal Title IV-E funds, both the state and county governments would be forced to absorb these additional costs.