

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** Senate Bill 178

**PRINTER NO.** 658

**AMOUNT**

No Fiscal Impact

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

February 1, 2019

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Senator Browne

**DESCRIPTION**

Senate Bill 178 amends the Election Code to change the method by which campaign finance reports are submitted.

This legislation would require all campaign finance reports or statements that are filed with the Secretary of the Commonwealth (secretary) to be submitted electronically. The secretary is required to develop and maintain the electronic filing system and establish and make available a training program for the system.

This bill also increases penalties for failing to file reports and statements on time. The fine for submissions six or fewer days late is \$50 per day; the fine for submissions seven or more days late is \$100 per day. The maximum penalty is \$2,000. A report is not considered filed until all fines have been paid.

This bill requires that businesses which have received non-bid contracts from the Commonwealth or its political subdivisions and submit reports disclosing political contributions must submit via the electronic system.

The secretary shall notify the Legislative Reference Bureau for publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin when the electronic filing system is available for use, and the act shall take effect 120 days after such publication.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Senate Bill 178 will not require any additional expenditure of Commonwealth funds. The department believes that any necessary IT system upgrades can be budgeted within their current appropriations.

Although Senate Bill 178 requires an increase in fines for late submissions, the department believes this legislation could decrease total penalties paid, due to the nature of a majority of current violations expected to be eliminated due to the system switch. While the department has not responded to our request for information in its entirety, this note assumes any potential revenue loss will be de minimis because penalties are currently \$10 per day and a maximum of \$250.