

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** Senate Bill 923

**PRINTER'S NO.** 1515

**AMOUNT**

Minimal Fiscal Impact

**FUND**

Military Family Relief Assistance (Restricted)

**DATE INTRODUCED**

May 15, 2013

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Senator Baker

**HISTORY OF BILL**

Referred to VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, May 15, 2013

Reported as amended, Oct. 22, 2013

First consideration, Oct. 22, 2013

Re-referred to APPROPRIATIONS, Oct. 23, 2013

Re-reported as committed, Nov. 18, 2013

**DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL**

Senate Bill 923 amends Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes further providing for military family relief assistance.

Specifically, this legislation does the following:

- Amends §7319(B)(2), changing provisions to allow for greater flexibility in providing aid to service members under circumstances unrelated to the member's military service;
- Amends §7319(H) by extending the sunset date of the "Military Family Relief Assistance" (MFRA) by an additional four years, to June 30, 2020.
- Amends §7319(J) by extending the time limit during which service members can apply for aid under the MFRA program from one year to three years after release from a tour of active duty for reservists, and from two years to four years for former members of the armed forces, its reserve or Guard, if:
  - a) The member was injured in the line of duty; and
  - b) Received an honorable discharge for medical reasons.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.

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**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The Military Family Relief Assistance Fund is a restricted revenue account within the General Fund that was established to receive funds through the voluntary contributions through an income tax form check-off box (§315.8 of the Tax Reform Code of 1971) and private contributions from businesses.

Following is a fiscal summary of the Fund:

	<b><u>FY 2011-12</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2012-13</u></b>
<b>Beginning FY Balance:</b>	<b>\$904,000</b>	<b>\$992,000</b>
Receipts:	\$156,000	\$142,000
<b>Available Revenue:</b>	<b>\$1,060,000</b>	<b>\$1,134,000</b>
Grants Disbursed:	\$68,000	\$104,000
<b>Ending Balance as of June 30:</b>	<b>\$992,000</b>	<b>\$1,030,000</b>

Revenue receipts for this Fund during the current fiscal year have exceeded \$16,000 with grant disbursements exceeding \$29,000, leaving an October 31, 2013 balance of \$1,017,000.

The MFRA program is funded in its entirety through voluntary contributions from individuals and private contributions from businesses.

According to the sponsor of this legislation, based on the recommended changes to the program guidelines, an additional 14 applicants would have been approved for aid relief, totaling \$37,816 in the last year.

Therefore, enactment of this legislation will have a minimal fiscal impact on the Military Family Relief Assistance Fund.