

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** House Bill 564

**PRINTER NO.** 3547

**AMOUNT**

See Fiscal Impact

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

February 21, 2017

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Representative Boback

**DESCRIPTION**

House Bill 564 establishes a new Section 1605.1 (Assessment of Civic Knowledge) in the Public School Code to require each school entity beginning in 2020-2021 to administer a locally developed assessment of United States history, government and civics at least once to students in grades seven through 12.

The bill provides that the civics portion of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service Naturalization test may be used by the school entity as the assessment and requires the school entity to issue a certificate of recognition, developed by the Department of Education (department), to students who achieve a perfect score on the assessment.

Within 12 months of the effective date of the legislation, the bill requires the department to post on its publically accessible Internet website links to the civics test and related resources provide by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service.

The bill requires the department to conduct a survey that school entities are required to respond to at the conclusion of the 2020-2021 school year, and every second school year thereafter, requesting the type of assessment administered, the total number of students who took the civics test, the total number of students that attained a passing grade, the grade level or levels in which the test was administered, and the course in which the civics test was administered. It also requires the department to make the survey data available on its publically accessible Internet website.

Further, the legislation provides that a student with an individualized education program (IEP) shall not be required to take the assessment, if the provisions of the student's IEP indicates otherwise.

The bill defines a school entity for the purpose of this section as a school district, area vocational technical school, intermediate unit, charter school, cyber charter school and regional charter school.

The legislation is scheduled to take effect in 60 days.

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## FISCAL NOTE

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

House Bill 564 will have no adverse fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds. The administrative requirements placed upon the department as a result of the implementation of the act related to the development of the certificate of recognition, collecting survey data and posting the information on its Internet website are routine and can be accomplished within its existing general government operations budget.

The costs to school entities should be minimal as the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service provides the civics portion of the naturalization test and test preparation materials on its publically accessible Internet website free of charge and Pennsylvania's schools are presently required to teach civics and government and the history of the United States and the Commonwealth. Based on current enrollment figures, if the assessment were administered to one grade level on an annual basis, which amounts to approximately 142,000 students, and the cost to print each assessment is approximately 50 cents, the statewide cost to all school entities as a result of enactment of the legislation will amount to \$71,000 annually.