

# Legislative Analysis



## FUNDING FOR CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS

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<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

**Senate Bill 21 as passed by the Senate**

**Sponsor: Sen. Rebekah Warren**

**House Committee: Michigan Competitiveness**

**Senate Committee: Michigan Competitiveness**

**Complete to 2-7-17**

Analysis available at

<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

### SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 21 would amend Public Act 196 of 1989, which creates the Crime Victim's Rights Fund and prescribes its administration. It would take effect 90 days after enactment.

Under the Act, the crime victim services commission assesses penalties against individuals convicted of felonies, misdemeanors, and ordinance violations, and also determines the revenue needed to pay for crime victim's rights services. Revenue for those services accrue to the fund, which is administered by the state treasurer and whose disbursements are directed and authorized by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

In addition to the fund's primary purpose of paying for crime victim's rights services, the Act currently allows funds to be used for crime victim compensation or to provide for establishment and maintenance of a statewide trauma system. The bill would also allow not more than \$1 million to be provided to children's advocacy centers to provide services to children who have experienced trauma or abuse as a result of a criminal offense.

*Child advocacy center* is defined for purposes of the section as an entity accredited as a child advocacy center by the National Children's Alliance or its successor agency (as defined in the Children's Advocacy Center Act, MCL 722.1042). The bill further provides that a qualifying center allows for a law enforcement agency, a prosecuting attorney, or a child protective services investigator to observe a forensic interview with a child who has experienced trauma or abuse as a result of a criminal offense. A children's advocacy center may also be a place where that child and the non-offending caregiver may receive support, crisis intervention, and ongoing therapy for the trauma or abuse.

MCL 780.904

### FISCAL IMPACT:

There is a sufficient balance in the Crime Victim's Rights Fund to support the use of up to \$1.0 million of the Fund for children's advocacy centers. Currently there are three permitted uses of the Fund: (1) for crime victim services; (2) amounts in excess of the necessary revenues for services may be used for crime victim compensation; and (3) any

additional excess revenue that has not been used for victim compensation may be provided for the statewide trauma system, but not more than \$3.5 million.

The Crime Victim's Rights Fund currently receives sufficient revenue to fully fund all purposes listed above, which total about \$20 million. The estimated balance in the Fund at the end of FY 2015–16 is \$23–25 million, with a similar balance anticipated for FY 2016–17 year end.

There are currently 23 accredited nonprofit children's advocacy centers in Michigan that provide services to 27 counties. In FY 2016-17, the enacted Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) budget appropriates \$2.0 million restricted funding from the Children's Advocacy Center Fund (established by Public Act 544 of 2008) as grants to these centers. Under the provisions of this bill, the amount of the state funding that these children's advocacy centers receive could increase by up to an additional \$1.0 million annually.

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