

STUDENT SAFETY ACT SUNSET EXTENSION

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Senate Bill 267 as passed by the Senate
Sponsor: Sen. Judy K. Emmons
House Committee: House Appropriations Committee
Senate Committee: Education
Complete to (6-19-2017)

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

The bill would amend the Student Safety Act (2013 PA 183), which created the Student Safety Fund, by extending the sunset on the Act, which is currently set to expire on October 1, 2017. The bill would extend the sunset to October 1, 2021.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Student Safety Act – 2013 PA 183, MCL 752.911-752918, also known as the Student Safety Act, was enacted to provide students and teachers a confidential and easily accessible means to report violent or threatening behavior to trained authorities positioned to help or intervene. The Act's requirements were generally based off of a reporting program created in Colorado following the Columbine shooting tragedy called "Safe2Tell". The Act requires the Attorney General to establish a program for receiving information from the public regarding potential self-harm, harm to others, or criminal acts directed at students, school employees, or schools. The Act also requires the program to include a hotline for receiving reports to be available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The program that was developed from the Act is OK2Say, a prevention-based reporting system.

OK2Say – OK2Say was launched in September 2014. The Student Safety Act required the Attorney General to issue a request for proposals to enter into a contract for operations of the hotline. From the bidding process, the Attorney General selected the Michigan State Police (MSP) to be the vendor, or partnering agency, to operate and staff the hotline and a Memorandum of Understanding was agreed upon. The hotline receives reports and information via mobile text, phone, email, and by its website and mobile app. The definition of "school" as used in the Act extends the program's services to public, private, denominational, parochial schools offering developmental kindergarten or any grade from 1 through 12. The Attorney General is responsible for administrative and operational oversight of OK2Say according to the Act's guidelines.

Reports and information received by OK2Say hotline technicians are reviewed, analyzed as necessary, and directed to local law enforcement, school, or community mental health officials when it is deemed prudent. OK2Say personnel are required to be provided appropriate training in crisis management, knowledgeable about the resources available in the community for mental health services, and all other matters and services determined to be relevant for the program. The Act also requires the Attorney General to develop a source of information on available community and mental health resources and contacts and to

notify schools and law enforcement of this information to support students and their parents. In 2016, the program received 3,359 tips, an increase of 54% from 2015. The top three tip categories are bullying, suicide threats, and "other" which includes harassment, depression, anxiety, and stress. An annual report is required by the Act and is available on the Michigan.gov website: http://www.michigan.gov/ok2say/0,5413,7-309-74154_74156--,00.html.

Student Safety Fund – The Act creates the Student Safety Fund within the state Treasury. Money in the fund at the close of the fiscal year remains in the fund and does not lapse to the General Fund. The Act specifies that the Attorney General may expend money from the fund to:

- Pay for costs of the department for administering the Act,
- Pay the costs of the vendor for operating the hotline, and
- Promote public awareness of the program.

The fund was appropriated \$3.5 million dollars of Lawsuit Settlement Proceeds in 2013 PA 102. \$2.4 million of this was authorized for the Attorney General and \$1.1 million for the MSP. These appropriations were authorized as work projects with expirations aligning with the sunset of the Student Safety Act. Lawsuit Settlement Proceeds are a state restricted revenue collected from lawsuit winnings from the Attorney General. The Attorney General is authorized the use of the proceeds upon appropriation at which point they are considered restricted funds. The unappropriated balance in the fund at the end of the fiscal year lapses to the General Fund.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have a positive fiscal impact to the Attorney General by authorizing the use of \$470,000 from the remaining amount in the Student Safety Fund to continue the OK2Say program. There is a balance of approximately \$905,000 remaining in the initial work project fund appropriated to the Attorney General as of June 19, 2017. The Fiscal Year 2017-18 budget omnibus bill, House Bill 4323 (H-1) CR-1, proposes \$470,000 from the Student Safety Fund for OK2Say.

All of the initial \$1.1 million work project funds appropriated to the MSP in 2013 is expected to be expended by Fiscal Year 2017-18. However, \$608,300 GF/GP is proposed in Fiscal Year 2017-18 to the MSP to support its costs related to OK2Say. The bill's extension of the sunset would not authorize additional money from the Student Safety Fund to the MSP but it would provide the Attorney General, MSP's partnering agency, funding for operations to continue between the two departments as they have.

This bill is not tie-barred to any other bill.

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