153rd GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FEE IMPACT

BILL:	**HOUSE BILL NO. 174**
SPONSOR:	**Representative Morrison**
DESCRIPTION:	**AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 11 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO THE VICTIMS COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

In accordance with 29 Del. C. § 913, the following information is provided relating to licenses and fees.

Description of the Legislation:
This Act, known as the Elizabeth Barnes Act, provides support services to eligible families and dependents of individuals who have died by suicide by providing them with financial assistance or services through the Suicide Assistance Fund (the Fund) by filing a claim administered by the Victims' Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP) through the Department of Justice (DOJ).

This Act imposes a $0.12 monthly surcharge on business, residential, wireless, and prepaid wireless telephone services that must be collected and deposited into the Fund.

Affected Entities:
Department of Justice; Department of Finance, Division of Revenue

Fiscal Impact:
Retailers will remit the surcharge quarterly to the Department of Finance, Division of Revenue, and retailers may retain 3 percent of the collected surcharge. Based on prior historical collections data, the Department of Finance estimates that this additional surcharge will generate an estimated $2,100,000 of revenue annually. Revenue is projected to increase by 1% annually, reflecting population growth estimates.

The timing of when surcharge collections could begin will depend upon the enactment of this Act and when the Division of Revenue can complete system enhancement and testing. For this fee impact statement, the surcharge is assumed to be in place during the second quarter of fiscal year 2026, allowing for an estimated nine months of collections.

Fiscal Year 2026: $1,575,000
Fiscal Year 2027: $2,121,000
Fiscal Year 2028: $2,142,210

Intended Use of Revenue:
The revenue generated from this surcharge shall be deposited in the Fund. Revenue may be expended for agency administrative expenses and eligible claims, consistent with the provisions of this Act. Balances in the Fund on June 30th of each year shall carry forward and will not revert to the General Fund.

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Office of the Controller General