



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 1337

PRINTERS NO. 3900

PRIME SPONSOR: Toohil

REVENUE INCREASE/(DECREASE)

FUND	FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16
Access to Justice Account	\$2,271,000	\$2,478,000

SUMMARY: House Bill 1337 amends the Judicial Code concerning a surcharge on court costs and filing fees, and the form in which permanent court records may be recorded. It would take effect in 30 days.

ANALYSIS: Concerning court costs and filing fees, this legislation changes the composition of surcharges levied pursuant to Section 3733.1 of the Judicial Code as it relates to the Access to Justice (ATJ) Account and the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network (PLAN). Under current law this section imposes a surcharge on court costs and filing fees totaling \$13.50. This consists of a permanent surcharge of \$2.25 and a temporary surcharge, expiring on December 31, 2014, of \$11.25. From this temporary surcharge, \$1.00 is sent to the ATJ Account to fund the PLAN.

House Bill 1337 increases the total surcharge under this section to \$15.50. The current permanent surcharge of \$2.25 remains and an additional permanent surcharge of \$2.00 is sent to the ATJ Account to fund the PLAN. The expiration date of the temporary surcharge is extended to December 31, 2017, and the \$1.00 from this temporary surcharge will no longer be sent to the ATJ Account.

Concerning court records, House Bill 1337 allows permanent court records to be copied using the latest technology, including electronic or digital means of copying.

FISCAL IMPACT: According to data and estimates provided by the Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts, the fee increase in House Bill 1337 will provide an additional \$2,478,000 for the ATJ Account and the PLAN per fiscal year. This would increase the total estimated revenue for the PLAN from \$10,351,000 to \$12,829,000 per fiscal year. It should be noted this estimate assumes collection of the additional fee for a full fiscal year. To the extent collection of this additional fee begins after July 1, 2014, the estimate would be reduced proportionately in that fiscal year.

PREPARED BY: Jeff Miller
House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: July 2, 2014

Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.