



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

SENATE BILL NO. 222

PRINTERS NO. 1264

PRIME SPONSOR: Greenleaf

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19
General Fund	See Fiscal Impact	

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 222, Printer's Number 1264 amends Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedures by amending Section 911 (Courts of common pleas) and adding a new Section 1906.1 (Senior judge operation support grant program).

ANALYSIS:

SB 222 amends the Judicial Code to provide for an increase in the number of judges (8) in the Court of Common Pleas in seven specific judicial districts across the Commonwealth. The numbers are as follows:

- Seventh (Bucks County) increase from 13 to 15 (increase of 2);
- Ninth (Cumberland) increase from 6 to 7 (increase of 1);
- Twenty-second (Wayne) increase from 1 to 2 (increase of 1);
- Twenty-seventh (Washington) increase from 6 to 7 (increase of 1);
- Thirty-second (Delaware) increase from 20 to 21 (increase of 1);
- Thirty-eighth (Montgomery) increase from 23 to 24 (increase of 1), and
- Forty-third (Monroe) increase from 6 to 7 (increase of 1).

In addition, the legislation was amended to provide for the reauthorization of the senior judge operational support grant program. Section 1906 (Senior judge operational support grants) of the Judicial Code expired on June 30, 2017. New Section 1906.1 reauthorizes the senior judge operational support grant program, at existing reimbursement rates to provide financial assistance to counties for the judicial administration for facilities and staff for the senior judges assigned to the court of common pleas.

This will be effective immediately, with Section 1906.1 retroactive to July 1, 2017.

FISCAL IMPACT:

According to the Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC), the current annual costs per judge is approximately \$300,000 (including salary and benefits). The legislation specifies that upon enactment, six of the eight judges will be added immediately; however, the Ninth and Twenty-second judicial districts will be filled by subsequent municipal elections. Assuming that

the six judges are appointed as prescribed in SB 222 there could be the potential fiscal impact of approximately \$1 million to Commonwealth funds for Fiscal Year 2017-2018, given more than one-half of the fiscal year remains.

Enactment of the new Section 1906.1 will have no adverse fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds. The General Appropriations Act of 2017 funded the senior judge operational grants at \$1,375, 000.

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House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: October 18, 2017

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