



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

SENATE BILL NO. 1208

PRINTERS NO. 2006

PRIME SPONSOR: Browne

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUNDS	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24
General Fund, Motor License Fund, Local Government Funds, Access to Justice Account, and Judicial Computer System Augmentation Account	See Fiscal Impact	

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 1208 amends the Judicial Code (Title 42) concerning the payment and collection of court costs, restitution, and fines. It would take effect in 120 days.

ANALYSIS:

This legislation amends the Judicial Code (Title 42) concerning payment of court costs, restitution, and fines to provide that if a defendant fails to appear at a financial determination hearing, the issuing authority, senior judge, or senior magisterial district judge may turn the delinquent account over to a private collection agency or the county's collection enforcement unit. Each communication by the collection agency or collection enforcement unit must include notice to the defendant of the right to request a new financial determination hearing.

FISCAL IMPACT:

According to the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC), as of October 11, 2022, there are 67,912 dockets with an outstanding balance due. This also includes cases in which a failure to appear warrant has been issued, no payments have been made, and the dockets have not been referred to collections. The total outstanding amount due, which has accumulated over numerous years, is \$17,284,752. The outstanding amount due has increased by approximately \$1 million since 2021. Most of these outstanding fines are for violations of the Vehicle Code. Philadelphia County is not included in these figures because it does not use the statewide AOPC data system.

Assuming 25% of the above-mentioned dockets are sent to collections and successfully collected, this would generate one-time revenue of approximately \$4,321,000 and \$250,000 annually thereafter, to be distributed to the following:

- General Fund;
- Motor License Fund;
- Local Government Funds;
- Access to Justice Account; and

- Judicial Computer System Augmentation Account.

Enactment of this legislation provides an additional enforcement tool to the courts that may result in additional funds being collected for fines, court costs and restitution to victims.

PREPARED BY: Jeff Miller
House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: October 26, 2022

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