

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 1365

PRINTER NO. 2068

AMOUNT

FY 2016-17 No Fiscal Impact
 FY 2017-18 \$587,000 First Year Costs
 FY 2018-19 \$1.2 Million
 FY 2019-20 \$1.35 Million

FUND

General Fund

DATE INTRODUCED

September 21, 2016

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Greenleaf

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL

Senate Bill 1365 amends §911(a) (relating to Courts of Common Pleas) of Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, by increasing the number of Judges of the Courts of Common Pleas in five (5) separate judicial districts within the Commonwealth.

Specifically, this legislation increases the number of Judges of the Courts of Common Pleas in the following judicial districts:

Judicial District:	County:	Current Number of Judges:	Additional Judges:	New Number of Judges:
Seventh	Bucks	13	1	14
Ninth	Cumberland	6	1	7
Twenty-second	Wayne	1	1	2
Twenty-seventh	Washington	6	1	7
Thirty-eighth	Montgomery	23	1	24

The legislation provides that the new judgeships added to the seventh, twenty-second, twenty-seventh and thirty-eighth judicial districts shall be established on January 2, 2018, and shall initially be filled by election at the 2017 municipal election. The new judgeship added to the ninth judicial district shall be established on January 2, 2020, and shall be initially filled by the election at the 2019 municipal election.

This act shall take effect immediately.

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FISCAL IMPACT:

According to the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC), the FY 2017-18 budgeted cost per Judge of the Courts of Common Pleas is \$293,500, including salary and benefits. This cost does not include the annual county court reimbursement grant, calculated at a statutory rate of \$70,000 per judgeship.

The enactment of this legislation will have no adverse fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds during the 2016-17 fiscal year. The Commonwealth will be required to fund an additional four (4) judgeships for one-half of FY 2017-18, at a cost of \$293,500 per judgeship.

Future salary and benefit costs for the additional judgeships are difficult to estimate due to unknown variables, such as future pension contribution rates and annual salary increases, which are based on the latest 12-month change to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).