

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** Senate Bill 222

**PRINTER NO.** 765

**AMOUNT**

FY 2016-17 No Fiscal Impact  
 FY 2017-18 (\$2.0 Million) Annual Costs

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

January 26, 2017

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Senator Greenleaf

**DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL**

Senate Bill 222 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 six (6) 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:

<b>Judicial District:</b>	<b>County:</b>	<b>Current Number of Judges:</b>	<b>Additional Judges:</b>	<b>New Number of Judges:</b>
Seventh	Bucks	13	2	15
Ninth	Cumberland	6	1	7
Twenty-second	Wayne	1	1	2
Twenty-seventh	Washington	6	1	7
Thirty-second	Delaware	20	2	22
Thirty-eighth	Montgomery	23	1	24

The legislation provides that the new judgeships added shall be established upon enactment, except the new judgeship added to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District shall be established on January 2, 2022, and shall be initially filled by election at the 2021 municipal election.

This act shall take effect immediately.

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## FISCAL NOTE

### **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 \$294,500, 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.

Assuming this legislation is enacted on July 1, 2017, seven (7) of the judgeships shall be deemed to be vacancies occurring on the effective date of the statute and shall be filled by appointment by the Governor. The additional judgeship for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District shall be established on January 2, 2022, and shall be initially filled by election at the 2021 municipal election.

Therefore, the enactment of this legislation would have a negative fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds in the amount of \$2.0 Million in FY 2017-18 and will have an impact on local government funds as well for additional courtroom space and staffing.

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).