

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** Senate Bill 741

**PRINTER NO.** 903

**AMOUNT**

\$7.1 Million Additional Annual Revenue

**FUND**

Judicial Computer System Augmentation  
Restricted Receipt Account  
\*Access to Justice Account

**DATE INTRODUCED**

June 4, 2017

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Senator Greenleaf

**DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL**

Senate Bill 741 amends Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to address sunset provisions and surcharges related to funding of the courts and civil legal services for poor and disadvantaged persons in the Commonwealth.

This legislation does the following:

- Extends the sunset provision from June 30, 2017 to June 30, 2022 for §1906 – Senior judge operational support grants. This defrays the costs imposed on the counties for the staff and facilities relating to senior judges assigned to the courts of common pleas;
- Adds \$2 (i.e., from \$10 to \$12) to surcharges imposed on all court filings in the Commonwealth and makes a corresponding increase to the amount of surcharges that are deposited into the Access to Justice Account;
- Extends the sunset provision from December 31, 2017 to December 31, 2022 for the Judicial Computer System Augmentation Account; and
- Eliminates the sunset provision (currently November 1, 2017) for the Access to Justice funding that supports the delivery of civil legal services to poor and disadvantaged persons.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

According to the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts, the above mentioned increase in fees collected for the Access to Justice Account would generate an additional \$3.55 million annually for each \$1 increase. Therefore, enactment of this legislation would generate an additional \$7.1 million annually, to be deposited into the Access to Justice Account to support the delivery of civil legal services to poor and disadvantaged persons in the Commonwealth. Assuming an enactment date of September 1, 2017, the increase would generate \$5.9 million during FY 2017-18.

# **SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE**

Extension of the sunset provisions in the legislation will have no adverse fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds. Presently, revenue is generated for the Judicial Computer System Augmentation Account and the Access to Justice Account by the collection of additional fees and surcharges by the courts. Annual revenue generated from these fees and surcharges is approximately \$24.3 million.