

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. House Bill 196

PRINTER NO. 168

AMOUNT

\$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000 in FY 2020-21

FUND

General Fund

DATE INTRODUCED

January 28, 2019

PRIME SPONSOR

Representative Diamond

DESCRIPTION

House Bill 196 is a Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to organize the Judiciary into representative districts.

This legislation amends Article V (The Judiciary) to provide that justices of the Supreme Court and judges of the Superior Court and Commonwealth Court shall be elected from each judicial district and shall provide every resident of the Commonwealth with approximately equal representation on a court.

The General Assembly shall, by law, establish:

- 1) The judicial districts from which justices of the Supreme Court and the judges of the Superior Court and the Commonwealth Court are elected;
- 2) A transition to an appellate court judiciary elected from judicial districts;
- 3) The effect of judicial districts upon eligibility to seek retention election;
- 4) The order in which judicial districts shall elect justices of the Supreme Court and judges of the Superior Court and the Commonwealth Court; and
- 5) The decennial realignment of the appellate judicial districts based on the federal decennial census, beginning in 2021 and occurring each ten years thereafter.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Article XI, Section 1, of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires that legislation proposing to amend the Constitution be passed by the General Assembly in two consecutive legislative sessions, be advertised in two newspapers in each county after each passage and thereafter be approved by the electorate.

The Department of State estimates the cost for each required advertisement of a constitutional amendment to be approximately \$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000. Costs for advertising the amendment in two consecutive legislative sessions would amount to approximately \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000.