
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2210 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY DIAMOND, CAUSER, EVERETT, HELM, MAHER, MILLARD,
NELSON, ORTITAY, D. PARKER, RADER, SAYLOR, WARD AND
ZIMMERMAN, JUNE 23, 2016

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, JUNE 23, 2016

A JOINT RESOLUTION

1 Proposing integrated amendments to the Constitution of the
2 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in the Judiciary, further
3 providing for the Supreme Court, the Superior Court, the
4 Commonwealth Court and for judicial districts and boundaries.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby resolves as follows:

7 Section 1. The following integrated amendments to the
8 Constitution of Pennsylvania are proposed in accordance with
9 Article XI:

10 (1) That section 2 of Article V be amended to read:

11 § 2. Supreme Court.

12 The Supreme Court (a) shall be the highest court of the
13 Commonwealth and in this court shall be reposed the supreme
14 judicial power of the Commonwealth;

15 (b) shall consist of seven justices, to be elected from
16 seven judicial districts which shall be established by law, one
17 of whom shall be the Chief Justice; and

18 (c) shall have such jurisdiction as shall be provided by

1 law.

2 (2) That section 3 of Article V be amended to read:

3 § 3. Superior Court.

4 The Superior Court shall be a statewide court, and shall
5 consist of [the number of judges, which shall be not less than
6 seven judges] 15 judges, to be elected from 15 judicial
7 districts which shall be established by law, and have such
8 jurisdiction as shall be provided by this Constitution or by the
9 General Assembly. One of its judges shall be the president
10 judge.

11 (3) That section 4 of Article V be amended to read:

12 § 4. Commonwealth Court.

13 The Commonwealth Court shall be a statewide court, and shall
14 consist of [the number of judges] nine judges, to be elected
15 from nine judicial districts which shall be established by law,
16 and have such jurisdiction as shall be provided by law. One of
17 its judges shall be the president judge.

18 (4) That section 11 of Article V be amended to read:

19 § 11. Judicial districts; boundaries.

20 [The number and boundaries of judicial districts shall be
21 changed by the General Assembly only with the advice and consent
22 of the Supreme Court.]

23 (a) The number of judges and justices of the Supreme Court,
24 the Superior Court and the Commonwealth Court elected from each
25 judicial district shall provide every resident of the
26 Commonwealth with approximately equal representation on a court.
27 Each judicial district shall be composed of compact and
28 contiguous territory as nearly equal in population as
29 practicable. Each judicial district shall elect one judge or
30 justice. Unless absolutely necessary, no county, city,

1 incorporated town, borough, township or ward may be divided in
2 forming a judicial district.

3 (b) The General Assembly shall, by law, establish:

4 (1) The judicial districts from which justices of the
5 Supreme Court and the judges of the Superior Court and the
6 Commonwealth Court are elected.

7 (2) A transition to an appellate court judiciary elected
8 from judicial districts.

9 (3) The effect of set judicial districts upon eligibility to
10 seek retention election.

11 (4) The order in which judicial districts shall elect
12 justices of the Supreme Court and judges of the Superior Court
13 and the Commonwealth Court.

14 (5) The decennial realignment of the appellate judicial
15 districts based on the Federal decennial census, beginning in
16 2021 and occurring each ten years thereafter.

17 (c) Residency qualification for election or appointment to
18 the Supreme Court, the Superior Court and the Commonwealth Court
19 shall be established by the General Assembly.

20 (d) Except as provided under subsection (b) and section
21 7(b), the number and boundaries of all other judicial districts
22 shall be established by the General Assembly by law, with the
23 advice and consent of the Supreme Court.

24 Section 2. (a) Upon the first passage by the General
25 Assembly of these proposed constitutional amendments, the
26 Secretary of the Commonwealth shall proceed immediately to
27 comply with the advertising requirements of section 1 of Article
28 XI of the Constitution of Pennsylvania and shall transmit the
29 required advertisements to two newspapers in every county in
30 which such newspapers are published in sufficient time after

1 passage of these proposed constitutional amendments.

2 (b) Upon the second passage by the General Assembly of these
3 proposed constitutional amendments, the Secretary of the
4 Commonwealth shall proceed immediately to comply with the
5 advertising requirements of section 1 of Article XI of the
6 Constitution of Pennsylvania and shall transmit the required
7 advertisements to two newspapers in every county in which such
8 newspapers are published in sufficient time after passage of
9 these proposed constitutional amendments. The Secretary of the
10 Commonwealth shall submit the proposed constitutional amendments
11 under section 1 to the qualified electors of this Commonwealth
12 as a single ballot question at the first primary, general or
13 municipal election which meets the requirements of and is in
14 conformance with section 1 of Article XI of the Constitution of
15 Pennsylvania and which occurs at least three months after the
16 proposed constitutional amendments are passed by the General
17 Assembly.