



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE
STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT
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Bill Number:	H. 4974	Amended by House Judiciary on January 30, 2020
Author:	Lucas	
Subject:	Increase Number of at-large Circuit Court Judges	
Requestor:	House Judiciary	
RFA Analyst(s):	Gardner and Miller	
Impact Date:	February 6, 2020	

Fiscal Impact Summary

The Senate and House of Representatives indicate that responsibilities required by this bill will be handled within their current resources and is not expected to have an expenditure impact.

The Judicial Department reports the total expenditure impact of the bill at full implementation would be \$2,129,624 in General Funds, of which \$79,000 is nonrecurring.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Amended by House Judiciary on January 30, 2020

State Expenditure

This bill as amended increases the number of circuit court judges elected in the fourteenth and fifteenth judicial circuits from two to three, increases the number of family court judges elected in the first judicial circuit from three to four, and increases the number of family court judges elected in the sixteenth judicial circuit from two to three. Once funding for the four additional judges is provided in the general appropriations act, the Judicial Merit Selection Commission will commence the process of nominating candidates for new judicial offices for election by the General Assembly. The judicial office added in the fourteenth circuit is not effective until January 1, 2022, which will result in a later start date for screening and election. The act becomes effective upon approval of the Governor.

The Senate. The bill as amended will have no expenditure impact on the General Fund, Other Funds, or Federal Funds. Any expenses associated with revisions to forms and policies can be managed within current appropriations of the Senate.

House of Representatives. The bill as amended will have no expenditure impact on the General Fund, Other Funds, or Federal Funds. Any expenses associated with revisions to forms and policies can be managed within current appropriations of the Senate.

Judicial Department. This bill as amended increases the number of circuit court judges in the fourteenth and fifteenth circuits from two each to three each, increases the number of family court judges in the first district from three to four, and increases the number of family court judges in the sixteenth district from two to three. In addition to hiring the four new judges, the department indicates support staff for the judges and associated operating expenses would be

required, including two law clerks, four administrative assistants, and four court reporters. The recurring personnel costs would be \$1,942,624; the recurring operating costs would be \$108,000 (judges' monthly allowance, travel for court rotation, supplies, and general operating needs/automation); and the non-recurring operating costs would be \$79,000 (office furniture, equipment, and automation). The total expenditure impact of the bill would be \$2,129,624 (rounded) in General Funds.

State Revenue

N/A

Local Expenditure

N/A

Local Revenue

N/A



Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director