

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



FISCAL NOTE

HB 1653 - SB 1999

February 9, 2016

SUMMARY OF BILL: Authorizes reimbursement to general sessions courts for court costs in criminal cases in which the defendant is indigent. Requires the Department of Correction (DOC) to pay any bill of costs or other fees owed to a county within 60 days of the bill being submitted.

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:

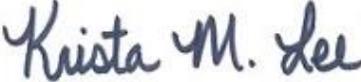
Increase State Expenditures – Exceeds \$890,600

Assumptions:

- There are 95 general sessions courts in Tennessee. The bill authorizes each one to receive reimbursement for court costs in criminal cases in which the defendant is indigent. The bill also requires DOC to pay any bill of cost within 60 days.
- The DOC will require an additional accounting technician to handle the additional workload.
- The base salary for an accounting technician II is \$29,832.00.
- The bill will increase recurring expenditures by \$43,142.46 [$\$29,832.00 + (\$29,832 \times 0.1503 \text{ benefits}) + (\$29,832.00 \times 0.0765 \text{ FICA}) + \$6,544.56 \text{ insurance}$].
- It is assumed that the new position will require \$5,000 in recurring costs for supplies, phone, internet, and other related expenses.
- Under current practice, the DOC reimburses courts of record for cases in which a defendant is charged with a felony, but is ultimately convicted or pleads guilty to a misdemeanor.
- The bill would allow general sessions courts, which are not courts of record, to be reimbursed for the same cases.
- It is assumed that the bill will result in no less than 2,500 cases in general session courts being reimbursed at an average rate of \$337 per case. The bill will result in a recurring increase of state expenditures estimated to exceed \$842,500 (2,500 cases x \$337 per case).
- The total recurring increase in state expenditures is estimated to exceed \$890,642.50 ($\$43,142.46 + \$5,000 + \$842,500$).

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



Krista M. Lee, Executive Director

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