

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE  
Revised

Senate Bill 300 (Senator Miller)

Judicial Proceedings and Budget and Taxation

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Circuit Courts - District Court - Judges

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This bill increases the number of circuit court judges by adding one judge for St. Mary’s County and two judges for Prince George’s County. The bill also increases the number of District Court judges by adding one judge each for Districts 6 and 10 and two judges for District 1.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures would increase by approximately \$1.19 million in FY 1999, which reflects the bill’s October 1, 1998 effective date. The FY 1999 budget includes a general fund allocation of approximately \$1.18 million for this purpose, which is contingent on enactment of this bill or House Bill 852. Out-year expenditures reflect annualization, inflation, and salary increases. Potential acceleration of receipt of general fund revenues.

(in millions)	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003
GF Revenues	-	-	-	-	-
GF Expenditures	\$1.19	\$1.50	\$1.52	\$1.53	\$1.54
Net Effect	(\$1.19)	(\$1.50)	(\$1.52)	(\$1.53)	(\$1.54)

Note: ( ) - decrease; GF - general funds; FF - federal funds; SF - special funds

**Local Effect:** Local expenditures could increase in FY 1999 by \$240,000 for Prince George’s County and \$174,700 for St. Mary’s County. Future year increases would reflect annualization, salary adjustments, and inflation. Potential indeterminate acceleration of receipt of revenues. **This bill imposes mandates on units of local government.**

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Fiscal Analysis

**State Revenues:** The timing of the receipt of general fund revenues could accelerate to the

extent that the presence of the new District Court judges increases the pace at which the District Court's workload proceeds. If cases proceed more quickly, the court could receive fees, costs, and fines imposed in cases sooner than those revenues otherwise would be received.

**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures would increase by an estimated \$1,193,432 in fiscal 1999, which reflects the bill's October 1 effective date. This estimate includes the costs of salaries and fringe benefits for three circuit court judges, four District Court judges, three circuit court clerks, four District Court clerks, and four District Court bailiffs. The estimate also includes costs for supplies and a one-time outlay for additional equipment of \$67,500.

Judicial salaries	\$543,919
Fringe benefits	359,750
Other salaries	158,494
Fringe benefits	62,419
Supplies and equipment	<u>68,850</u>
<b>Total FY 1999 State expenditures</b>	<b>\$1,193,432</b>

Future year expenditures reflect full salaries with 3.5% annual increases and 3% employee turnover for the non-judicial positions, and 1% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses. Judicial salary increases (including potential cost-of-living increases) are not included because they are determined by the Judicial Compensation Commission and the General Assembly. The estimate is based on salaries of \$107,775 per year for circuit court judges and \$100,475 for District Court judges, which will take effect July 1, 1998.

The fiscal 1999 budget includes a total allocation of \$1,180,230 for salaries and fringe benefits for three circuit court judges, four District Court judges, associated support staff, and operating costs. The allocation is contingent upon the enactment of this bill or House Bill 852.

The District Court advises that it has sufficient physical facilities to accommodate the proposed new District Court judges and their staffs.

**Local Revenues:** St. Mary's and Prince George's counties could experience an acceleration of the receipt of revenues to the extent that the presence of the new circuit court judges increases the pace at which the courts' workloads proceed. If cases proceed more quickly, the courts could receive fees, costs, and fines imposed in cases sooner than those revenues otherwise would be received.

**Local Expenditures:** The counties provide support staff, supplies, and equipment for circuit court judges, as well as capital and operating expenses for courtrooms and office facilities used by the circuit court judges and their staffs. Specific costs associated with the circuit courts vary from county to county.

Prince George's County estimates that the total salaries, fringe benefits, and operating expenditures associated with the two new judges would be approximately \$240,000 in fiscal 1999, which reflects the bill's October 1, 1998 effective date. In future years, these costs would be adjusted for annualization, inflation, salary increases, employee turnover, and the deduction of one-time expenses occurring in fiscal 1998 only. Similar expenditures for St. Mary's County in fiscal 1999 are estimated to be \$174,690 (for one new judge).

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**Information Source(s):** Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); St. Mary's and Prince George's counties; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 16, 1998  
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Analysis by: Claire E. Rooney	Direct Inquiries to:
Reviewed by: John Rixey	John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst
	(410) 841-3710
	(301) 858-3710