

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2007 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

Senate Bill 209

(Senator Gladden)

Judicial Proceedings

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**Baltimore City - Circuit Court - Jury Staff**

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This bill allows the administrative judge of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City to appoint a jury commissioner and employ staff, who are to be paid a salary as provided in the Baltimore City budget. The bill removes the jury commissioner's office from the personnel merit system for the Circuit Court for Baltimore City. The bill may not be construed to reduce the number of positions in the office of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2007.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill would not reduce the number of positions in the office of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City.

**Local Effect:** Baltimore City expenditures could increase by approximately \$500,000 in FY 2008 to pay for the hiring of new staff in the jury commissioner's office. Baltimore City revenues would not be affected. **This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.** The projected increase in Baltimore City expenditures is equivalent to almost \$0.002 on the city's property tax rate.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Current Law:** A jury commissioner is the individual designated in accordance with a county's jury plan to manage jury selection and service. A jury commissioner for a circuit court is either the clerk of the circuit court or another individual designated in the jury plan. The Baltimore City jury plan designates that the jury commissioner is selected by the circuit court bench, and is an employee of the court, while the jury commissioner's staff are employees in the circuit court clerk's office. Both the jury commissioner and staff are currently paid by the State.

The jury commissioner in Baltimore City is included in the personnel merit system for the office of the clerk of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City. This system, which sets forth rules for recruitment, appointment, compensation, and other aspects of employment with the clerk's office, is administered by a director appointed by the Baltimore City circuit court judges and a judicial personnel committee. Employees under this system participate in the State Employees' Pension System.

**Background:** The office of the clerk of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City currently employs 3 managers and 10 staff at a cost of \$499,694 in wages and benefits in fiscal 2006, paid for out of State funds.

**State Fiscal Effect:** Because § 4 of this bill provides that "this Act is not intended and may not be construed to reduce the number of positions in the office of the clerk of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City," the Judiciary advises that it would not be able to reduce expenditures on personnel as a result of this bill. As a result, this bill may result in the hiring by Baltimore City of personnel who duplicate the functions of staff who continue to be employed by the State.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** Baltimore City expenditures could increase by approximately \$500,000 in fiscal 2008. This estimate reflects the salaries and fringe benefits cost of hiring 3 new managers and 10 new staff in the jury commissioner's office. Future year expenditures would increase by a higher amount due to annual salary adjustments.

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## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Baltimore City,  
Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 7, 2007  
ncs/hlb

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Analysis by: Nicholas M. Goedert

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510