Department of Planning and Budget
2025 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

PUBLISHED: 1/24/2025 9:15 AM **ORIGINAL**

Bill Number: HB2223 **Patron:** Cousins
Bill Title: Abolition of fees; legal representation of indigent defendant.

Bill Summary: Eliminates the fees for the cost of court-appointed counsel or public defender representation for persons who are determined to be indigent.

Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes **Items Impacted:** Front Page
Explanation: Adjust general fund revenues downward

Fiscal Summary: This bill would have an indeterminate, but potentially significant, impact on revenue collected by Courts which goes to the general fund.

General Fund Revenue Impact:

Agency	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030
Front Page		($12.1 million)	Indeterminate	Indeterminate	Indeterminate	Indeterminate
TOTAL		**Indeterminate**	**Indeterminate**	**Indeterminate**	**Indeterminate**	**Indeterminate**

Fiscal Analysis: The OES provided the following information to help assess the potential impact of this bill. Between calendar years 2019 and 2023, the Commonwealth assessed an average of $33,675,781 annually against defendants for the cost of their legal representation in criminal violations of the state Code. During the same timeframe, an average of $12,121,881 in payments was received annually for the assessed amounts. This estimated amount would have been foregone under this proposal. Therefore, adjustments to general fund revenue may be required.

OES reports that the cost to represent a defendant charged with the violation of a local ordinance is charged against the locality and, if the defendant is convicted, the costs assessed against the defendant would be paid to the locality. Since these transactions do not implicate Commonwealth funds, they are not included in this estimate.

Other: None