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**MARYLAND JUDICIARY**

**FISCAL YEAR 2022 OPERATING BUDGET**

**RESPONSE TO DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES ANALYSIS**

**C00A00**

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
HOUSE PUBLIC SAFETY & ADMINISTRATION SUBCOMMITTEE  
DELEGATE KEITH E. HAYNES  
FEBRUARY 18, 2021

SENATE BUDGET & TAXATION COMMITTEE  
SENATE PUBLIC SAFETY, TRANSPORTATION, & ENVIRONMENT SUBCOMMITTEE  
SENATOR CORY V. MCCRAY  
FEBRUARY 18, 2021

**JUDICIAL BUDGET REVIEW AND INTRODUCTION**

The Judiciary's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Submission is \$665 million, which represents approximately 1.4 percent of the State's operating budget. The major components of the budget are as follows: salaries and benefits at 68 percent, contractual services at 12 percent, aid/grants to courts at 9 percent, and fixed costs at 3 percent. The General Fund submission of \$592 million represents a 5.92 percent increase at \$33.1 million over the Fiscal Year 2021 appropriation. The submission includes funding for personnel-related items such as employee merits, COLA, required salary increases for judges, health insurance, and pension as well as operational increases.

**BUDGET ISSUES**

**ISSUE 1A – MARYLAND JUDICIARY'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

*The Maryland Judiciary has undertaken a range of different operational phases over the past year to protect State employees and Marylanders from COVID-19.*

*Phase 1, which the courts operated under from March 16, 2020 to June 5, 2020, limited operations to emergencies only with a few exceptions. On June 5, 2020, operating under Phase 2, the courts began to hear more matters, which included remote hearings and some in-person*

*activities. Phase 2 included some matters that were postponed during Phase 1 of the health emergency and other priority matters. The Judiciary operated under this phase until July 20, 2020, and again from December 22, 2020, until March 12, 2021 (projected).*

*On July 20, 2020, the Judiciary moved to Phase 3 of the COVID-19 response. In addition to the cases that were being heard under Phases 1 and 2, the courts began to hear a wider range of cases, including trials for incarcerated defendants. Phase 3 lasted until August 31, 2020. On August 31, 2020, the courts moved to Phase 4, which included all criminal matters, minor traffic matters, all civil matters, landlord/tenant cases, and the full operation of problem-solving courts.*

*Maryland Courts began full operations on October 5, 2020, under Phase 5 of the COVID-19 response. However, as mentioned previously, the courts moved back to operating under Phase 2 starting on December 22, 2020.*

**The Judiciary should comment on the impact of COVID-19 on the ability of the courts to fulfill their mission and provide judicial services for Marylanders.**

**Judiciary Response:** The Department of Legislative Services has asked the Judiciary to comment on the impact of COVID-19 on the ability of the courts to fulfill their mission and provide judicial services for Marylanders.

Marylanders need access to justice. This is a fundamental truth that did not change during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Maryland Judiciary did not close, but rather ensured that core and urgent functions continued to be provided, even during the initial stay-at-home order last spring.

The Judiciary was required initially to restrict functions to the most urgent and essential services during the stay-at-home-period consistent with orders issued by the Governor. During that time, Judiciary leadership met to determine how best to expand operations as the pandemic levels improved in Maryland. The recommended phased approach was then incorporated into the Chief Judge's emergency administrative orders, authorized by emergency rules proposed by the Rules Committee and adopted by the Court of Appeals as the threat of the pandemic became apparent. The phased approach to the expansion of operations has provided the courts a roadmap for planning and implementation. The Administrative Office of the Courts and District Court Headquarters provided funding for and facilitated the purchase and installation of protective barriers, thermometers, and PPE necessary for the expansion of operations in conjunction with the administrative orders. In addition, the Judiciary provided software licenses, equipment, and training necessary for the handling of matters remotely, as each set of administrative orders has provided that remote hearings be conducted to the extent possible. The success with remote hearings foretells that such hearings are likely to be adopted into regularized operations in the future.

Moving from Phase I to Phase II on June 5, 2020; from Phase II to Phase III on July 20, 2020, with the reopening of clerks' offices to the public; and from Phase III to Phase IV on August 31, 2020, which provided for all operations other than jury trials; and finally, with the Circuit Courts fully prepared for jury trials, full operations under the emergency orders, on October 5, 2020; the leadership and the staff of the Maryland Judiciary worked remotely, in shifts, and then fully staffed in distanced workspaces throughout the pandemic to meet its mandate to the public. The

movement between each Phase was dependent on the status of the pandemic, in consultation with and consistent with the guidance of the CDC, the Maryland Department of Health, and local health departments. In-person and remote hearings were held to address criminal matters, especially those involving incarcerated defendants. Both the Court of Appeals and the Court of Special Appeals conducted arguments on a fully remote basis. Maryland Court Help Centers went fully remote and then, when possible, by appointment in person; mediations were offered on a remote basis. Problem Solving Courts, including drug courts, have continued to provide their life-altering and life-saving support and supervision throughout the pandemic. The volume of matters necessarily has been reduced, but in each Phase, these matters have been heard and resolved to the greatest extent possible. The level of effort required to allow the Judiciary to make these shifts in real time was demanding and constant, yet Judiciary leaders and staff consistently met the challenges, time and time again.

In October, the resumption of jury trials was the culmination of intensive planning by the Circuit Courts, including the borrowing of large local facilities for distanced jury selection, to allow serious criminal and civil matters to proceed. Eighty-eight jury trials were conducted between October 5 and November 15, 2020, all safely and without incident.

Unfortunately, rising infection rates in Maryland and nationwide forced a retreat to more restricted operations on November 16, 2020, first to Phase III and then to Phase II with some modifications allowed by the now well-established ability to conduct remote hearings and to allow distanced, in-person emergency or urgent matters.

With the promising drop in the infection rates and the availability of the vaccine to front-line and continuity of operations Judiciary staff, the Judiciary has made plans for the expansion of operations to move forward as hoped. The Judiciary will move directly to Phase IV operations again on March 15, 2021 and barring any change in the health trends in Maryland, to the resumption of jury trials on April 26, 2021. The Judiciary will continue to maintain safety protocols until the threat of the pandemic is over, whenever that may be, but the Judiciary has planned, implemented, and stands prepared to provide access to justice.

#### **ISSUE 1B – MARYLAND LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION FACING SEVERE BUDGET CONSTRAINTS**

*The Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC) is a nonprofit corporation that provides civil legal services to low-income Marylanders. The mission of the MLSC is to provide stable, efficient, and effective civil legal assistance through the distribution of funds to nonprofit legal service organizations. MLSC receives funding from the Interest on Lawyer Trust Accounts (IOLTA) program, surcharges from court filing fees, and a distribution from the Abandoned Property Fund. In fiscal 2021, MLSC provided funding to 37 nonprofits to ensure access to legal assistance for Marylanders.*

*Due to the impacts of COVID-19 and the resulting economic crisis, two of MLSC's three funding sources saw dramatic declines. IOLTA funding was impacted by low interest rates, and the surcharges from court filing fees were also negatively impacted when the Maryland Courts closed in response to COVID-19. As a result, MLSC stated that they recued their fiscal 2021*

*grants by roughly 9%. In response to the growing budget deficit for the corporation, the Maryland Office of the Attorney General (OAG) provided \$8.7 million in fiscal 2021 funding to backfill the grant commitments of MLSC. These funds from OAG must be used for housing security services. Additionally, Governor Hogan allocated \$3 million in CARES Act funding to MLSC to be used for any COVID-19-related legal purpose. The appropriation for MLSC remains consistent across fiscal 2021 and 2022 at \$22 million.*

*As passed by the General Assembly, the RELIEF Act (SB 496) provides MLSC with an additional \$3 million in fiscal 2021.*

**The Judiciary and MLSC should comment on if these funds will be sufficient to backfill any deficits in MLSC's fiscal 2021 budget or if additional funds will be needed.**

**Judiciary Response:** The MLSC response is attached and they will respond following the Judiciary's testimony. (Appendix A)

## **ISSUE 2 – MARYLAND ELECTRONIC COURTS DEPLOYMENT CONTINUES**

*For fiscal 2022, the Judiciary continues to provide a master planning document that gives a detailed review of its current IT projects that are funded by the Land Records Improvement Fund (LRIF). First among these is the MDEC initiative. Starting in fiscal 2021, MDEC has been the central IT project for the Judiciary and is a large, complex project designed to move the Maryland court system online. Twenty-one counties in the State have fully implemented MDEC, with Montgomery County being the next to go live followed by Prince George's County and Baltimore City. By the end of calendar 2022, all jurisdictions in the State are projected to be on MDEC.*

*The cost of the MDEC project has increased by \$2.9 million, from \$73.6 million in the fiscal 2021 budget to \$76.5 million in the fiscal 2022 budget. The Judiciary states that there have been delays to the rollout of MDEC due to COVID-19. Judiciary had to devote significant IT resources to enhancing infrastructure and technologies to support remote court proceedings. The rollout of MDEC in Montgomery County has also been delayed by approximately one year. The go-live date is now scheduled for October 2021. The vendor delivery of custom software for the Montgomery County implementation was delayed, but it has now been received and is in the process of being tested. **Exhibit 14** provides more detail on the Judiciary's entire slate of IT projects. A description of each project can be found in **Appendix 2**.*

**The Judiciary should comment on why the rollout of MDEC has slowed, especially with the focus that COVID-19 has placed on the ability to work and operate remotely.**

**Judiciary Response:** The Committee has asked the Judiciary to report on the progress of the MDEC rollout. As way of background, MDEC is the term used for the e-filing solution and the electronic case management system being implemented in the Judiciary. The e-filing system is known as File and Serve and allows attorneys or self-represented litigants to electronically file documents with the court. They can file from their offices, from their homes or from wherever they happen to be. The electronic case management system is known as Odyssey and allows the courts to maintain all case records electronically.

MDEC is now “live” in 21 counties. Only Montgomery County, Prince George’s County and Baltimore City remain. The order of these last three jurisdictions was intentional as the prior 21 jurisdictions all used similar legacy systems. The three remaining counties have unique legacy systems, unique both from the other 21 jurisdictions and from each other. To match the capabilities of the legacy systems, custom development is needed from the vendor Tyler Technologies. This custom development is extensive and requires regression testing prior to being introduced into the live system. New, positive developments will provide enhanced automation and will be deployed to the other jurisdictions. It effectively takes the system to MDEC 2.0.

There have been delays to the intended go-live date in Montgomery County in part because of COVID-19 and in part because of delay by the vendor in the development of the needed custom software. COVID-19 caused the Judiciary to deploy significant JIS and other staff resources to enable the courts (both MDEC and non-MDEC jurisdictions) to conduct remote hearings so that the courts could continue to operate in this new pandemic world. In addition, COVID-19-restricted operations required additional coordination for software delivery, testing and implementation that collectively contributed to the delay.

At the onset of the pandemic, it became important that the Judiciary adopt a secure audio/video platform, deploy this platform across the entire Judiciary, equip the courts with necessary laptops or cameras and develop a training and best practices protocol for remote hearings. The Judiciary was able to rapidly pivot, and all courts have the capability to conduct remote hearings and have been conducting these hearings almost from the beginning of the pandemic. Since June 1, 2020, the Judiciary has conducted more than 70,000 Zoom meetings, with over 470,000 participants, and encompassing over 21,000,000 minutes. Ironically, about a week before the pandemic hit, there was a meeting with the Department of Health and others to discuss a pilot in one location for using “telehealth” to conduct incompetency and other mental health related hearings remotely. As a result of the pandemic, in the matter of several months, the Judiciary was using remote hearings for these types of hearings, as well as many, many others across the state and by all measures it has been a very positive success both for the participants and the court.

When the term remote is used, in most instances it means that the participants can call or video into the hearing, but the judge and clerk are in the courtroom. This allows the recording of the proceeding through the court recording system. This also aids individuals that may have indicated that they were going to appear remotely, but still travel to the courthouse. All jurisdictions are capable of doing these types of hearings regardless of whether they are MDEC or non-MDEC counties.

There are some courts that have been able to work completely remotely meaning no one is physically present in the courtroom, including the judge and the courtroom clerk. In such instances, the video platform records the proceedings and the recording is later uploaded into the court recording system. If an individual comes to the courthouse, they will be given the remote hearings link, or the case will be rescheduled. This capability is greatly enhanced in MDEC counties as case documents can be accessed by the judge and courtroom clerk regardless of their location.

In addition to COVID-19-related delays, the vendor was delayed in providing the new custom programming needed for Montgomery County and MDEC 2.0. However, the new code was

delivered in January and testing is well under way. The go-live for Montgomery County is presently scheduled for October 26, 2021.

### **ISSUE 3 – STRESS ON THE LRIF CONTINUES**

*The LRIF, or the Circuit Court Real Property Records Improvement Fund, was created to stabilize and modernize operations in the land records offices of the circuit court. The LRIF remains funded by a surcharge on recordable land instruments that are items related to property matters, such as deeds, mortgages, leases, and grants. These items, when filed or recorded, are then assessed a charge. In calendar 2011, the LRIF surcharge was increased from \$20 to \$40 by the Budget Reconciliation and Funding Act (BRFA) of 2011, and that increase was supposed to sunset at the end of fiscal 2020. However, the BRFA of 2020 (Chapter 538) made the \$40 surcharge permanent. This has stabilized the LRIF in the short term; however, the long-term stress on the fund remains. **Exhibit 15** shows how continuing deficits starting in fiscal 2021 are projected to erode the fund balance in the out-years of the forecast. This indicates that, despite the action to maintain the elevated fee amount, expenditures are still outpacing revenues, and a fee increase or deferment of planned projects will be needed in the near future to avoid the complete draw down of the existing fund balance.*

**Judiciary Response:** In 1991, the General Assembly enacted legislation creating the Circuit Court Real Property Records Improvement Fund (the Fund) in response to the deteriorating conditions and the state of operations in the land records departments of the Clerk of the Circuit Court offices throughout the State. The legislation established a non-lapsing fund through the assessment of a \$5 surcharge on recordable land records instruments. The Fund's original sunset provision was lifted in 1995 and was subsequently extended on three occasions. In 2003, the surcharge was increased from \$5 to \$20. In 2005, the General Assembly mandated that all General Fund expenditures related to land records operations and support, as well as the salaries of over 256 employees would no longer be supported by the General Fund, but rather would be appropriated from the Fund. The Judiciary and the Land Records Improvement Fund Oversight Committee (LRIFOC), which was created in 1995 to serve an advisory body to the State Court Administrator, have steadfastly argued that the clerks' salaries and operational costs more appropriately should be funded through the General Fund. The LRIFOC comprises one representative each from the Maryland Land Title Association, the Maryland State Bar Association, the Maryland State Archives, the Conference of Circuit Court Clerks, and the Administrative Office of the Courts.

In November 2007, during the Special Session, the General Assembly passed the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (HB 1/SB 1, Chapter 2). This Act repealed the sunset provision, made the \$20 surcharge permanent, and expanded the scope of the Fund to include all the Judiciary's major information technology development projects for Fiscal Years 2009 and 2010.

In the 2010 Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act, the General Assembly removed the sunset provision for the support of the Judiciary's major information technology projects and made permanent that expenditures for all major information technology projects of the Maryland

Judiciary would be paid through the Fund. Moreover, all interest on the Fund's balance was diverted to the General Fund.

In 2011, through the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act, the General Assembly increased the Fund's surcharge to \$40, effective July 1, 2011. This was done to address a structural deficit and to sustain the Fund through Fiscal Year 2015 while anticipating a real estate market recovery. In 2015, the General Assembly extended the sunset provision through Fiscal Year 2020. In 2020, once again through the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act, the General Assembly made permanent the entire \$40 surcharge, thus removing the sunset.

While the removal of the sunset provision was helpful it does not solve, nor was it intended to solve, the structural imbalance in the Fund. The major IT projects that are projected by the Judiciary are necessary and required to support existing systems and to provide the Judiciary and the many justice partners it serves with the stability, security and technical resources that are functionally necessary in the Judiciary. As demonstrated by the pandemic and the continuing security concerns with IT networks, the projects that are anticipated by the Judiciary are not optional, they are required. All of the major IT projects listed in the analysis are imperative to the operations of the Judiciary.

Reducing funding for these projects would dangerously limit the ability of Judiciary to provide required levels of services, the resources needed to implement legislation that this body passes each year, and to strengthen Judiciary networks from breaches.

Absent any alternatives, the Judiciary will need to request an increase in filing fees within the 2022 legislative session to reduce the structural deficit and make the Fund whole.

For a synopsis of the history of the surcharge, please see Appendix B.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

### **RECOMMENDATION 1**

Add the following language:

Provided that \$1,392,469 in general funds, \$43,013 in special funds, and \$14,443 in reimbursable funds are reduced to increase the turnover rate to 2%. The Chief Judge is authorized to allocate this reduction across the Judiciary.

**Explanation:** This action reduces funds to a level consistent with a turnover rate of 2.0% to be more in line with actual vacancies.

**Judiciary Response:** The Judiciary concurs with the Department's recommendation.

## **RECOMMENDATION 2**

Add the following language:

Provided that \$4,776,357 in general funds, \$296,999 in special funds, and \$67,213 in reimbursable funds for fiscal 2022 general salary increases are reduced. The Chief Judge is authorized to allocate this reduction across the Judiciary.

**Explanation:** This action reduces funding in the fiscal 2022 budget provided for a 2.0% general salary increases beginning July 1, 2021. Legislative intent expressed in the fiscal 2021 budget indicated that funding for judicial employee compensation enhancements should be provided consistent with what is funded for Executive Branch employees and should be provided via the Department of Budget and Management. There is no funding provided in the Governor's fiscal 2022 allowance for statewide employee compensation enhancements.

**Judiciary Response:** The Judiciary disagrees with the Department's recommendation.

The Judiciary must be assured, as documented in the JCR from the 2020 legislative session, that COLAs will be provided by amendment through the Department of Budget and Management if COLAs are approved for other state employees. Due to the unreliable source of funding for the Judiciary COLAs, the Judiciary has included the COLA in its budget over the past three years, which creates the artificial impression that the Judiciary's budget submission is growing more than it actually is compared to other government units.

In Fiscal Year 2022, the Governor has selectively negotiated certain classes of employees, including some criminal justice agencies, to receive a COLA. Unfortunately, it appears that the Governor did not include funding for COLAs in the executive budget for the Judiciary.

## **RECOMMENDATION 3**

Add the following language:

Provided that \$7,531,417 in general funds, \$502,053 in special funds, and \$113,598 in reimbursable funds for fiscal 2022 merit increases are reduced. The Chief Judge is authorized to allocate this reduction across the Judiciary.

**Explanation:** This action reduces funds in the fiscal 2022 budget for a 3.5% merit increase beginning July 1, 2021. Legislative intent expressed in the fiscal 2021 budget indicated that funding for judicial employee compensation enhancements should be provided consistent with what is funded for Executive Branch employee and should be provided via the Department of Budget and Management. There is no funding provided in the Governor's fiscal 2022 allowance for statewide employee compensation enhancements.

**Judiciary Response:** The Judiciary disagrees with the Department's recommendation.

Again, in Fiscal Year 2022, the Governor has selectively negotiated certain classes of employees, including some criminal justice agencies, to receive up to a 4 percent increment. Referring back to Issue 1A, the Judiciary is a critical component to civil society, and Judiciary employees are essential to providing access to justice which is fundamental to the rule of law.



From the beginning of the pandemic to date, most Judiciary employees have been required to report to work in order to ensure continuity of essential court functions. These employees are front-facing and have served the public every day despite the stress of the pandemic.

Judiciary employees have demonstrated their commitment to public service and to the people of Maryland during a stressful and difficult period and as such, should be entitled to an increment.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 4**

Add the following language to the general fund appropriation:

, provided that \$8,250,000 of the general fund appropriation may be expended only for the purpose of providing attorneys for required representation at initial appearances before District Court Commissioners consistent with the holding of the Court of Appeals in DeWolfe v. Richmond. Any funds not expended for this purpose shall revert to the General Fund.

**Explanation:** This language restricts the use of \$8.25 million of the Judiciary's general fund appropriation for the implementation of DeWolfe v. Richmond.

**Judiciary Response:** The Judiciary concurs with the Department's recommendation.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 5**

Reduce the funding for capital improvement projects.  
The Chief Judge is authorized to allocate this reduction  
across the Judiciary.

**Amount Reduction**  
\$500,000 GF

**Judiciary Response:** The Judiciary concurs with the Department's recommendation.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 6**

Adopt the following narrative:

**Appointed Attorney Program Costs and Utilization:** The committees remain interested in the costs and operations of the Appointed Attorney Program. The committees request a report, to be submitted by October 1, 2021, detailing the fiscal 2021 costs and utilization of the Appointed Attorney Program.

<b>Information Request</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Appointed Attorney Program costs and utilization	Judiciary	October 1, 2021

**Judiciary Response:** The Judiciary concurs with the Department's recommendation.

## **RECOMMENDATION 7**

Adopt the following narrative:

**Judiciary Status Report on Major Information Technology Development:** The committees remain interested in the Judiciary's Major Information Technology Development Projects (MITDP). The committees request a report, to be submitted by December 15, 2021, detailing the MITDPs being undertaken by the Judiciary.

<b>Information Request</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Judiciary status report on MITDPs	Judiciary	December 15, 2021

**Judiciary Response:** The Judiciary concurs with the Department's recommendation.

## **RECOMMENDATION 8**

Adopt the following narrative:

**Judgeship Need for Fiscal 2023:** The committees remain interested in the judgeship needs at the Judiciary. The committees request a report, to be submitted by December 1, 2021, detailing the fiscal 2023 judgeship needs.

<b>Information Request</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Judgeship need for fiscal 2023	Judiciary	December 1, 2021

**Judiciary Response:** The Judiciary concurs with the Department's recommendation.

## **RECOMMENDATION 9**

Adopt the following narrative:

**Judiciary Report on Court Performance Measures:** The committees remain interested in the court performance measures. The committees request a report on court performance measures, to be submitted by November 1, 2021.

<b>Information Request</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Judiciary report on court performance measures	Judiciary	November 1, 2021

**Judiciary Response:** The Judiciary concurs with the Department's recommendation.



# MLSC

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### **FY22 Judiciary Budget Analysis**

#### **“Maryland Legal Services Corporation Facing Severe Budget Constraints”**

##### **MLSC Comment**

Thanks to the emergency funding provided by the Governor and the Attorney General, MLSC does not anticipate any deficits in the fiscal 2021 budget. The \$3 million that will be made available with full enactment of the RELIEF Act (SB 496) are restricted to eviction prevention legal services and will be deployed as such.

While the funds described above will prevent an MLSC deficit for FY21, they are one-time funds not available for FY22. MLSC is therefore facing a dire funding shortage in the coming fiscal year. Due to the inverse relationship between the economy and MLSC’s two major funding sources, we currently project that our FY22 income will be \$6 million - \$8 million lower than pre-pandemic levels.

The legislature is currently considering several initiatives that would increase revenue through MLSC’s current funding sources. If these initiatives are not successful, MLSC would be required to make significant cuts to grants for civil legal aid beginning in FY22.

## **Appendix B**

### **History of Real Property Records Improvements Fund Surcharge**

- 1991** Creation of Circuit Court Real Property Records Improvement Fund with a \$5.00 Surcharge to sunset in 1996 – Chapter 327
- 1995** Sunset lifted – Chapter 556 – Oversight Board created and sunset in 2001
- 1998** Sunset lifted – SB 388/Chapter 388 – Fund consists of surcharges and revenue from copiers
- 2000** Sunset lifted – extended from 2001 to 2006 – SB 214/Chapter 244 of 2000 Session
- 2003** Surcharge increased to \$20.00 – BRFA – HB 935/Chapter 203 of 2003 Session
- 2005** Sunset lifted and language added to pay the operating/salary expenses in Land Records Offices HB 640/Chapter 225 extended sunset to 2009; HB 147/Chapter 444 added operating/salary expenses language
- 2007\*** Language added for fiscal years 2009 & 2010 that major information technology development projects of the Judiciary be expended from the fund – HB 1/Chapter 2 of 2007 special session
- 2007** Sunset eliminated (\$20.00 surcharge made permanent) - HB 1/Chapter 2 of 2007 special session
- 2010** Deleted fiscal year restriction (from 2007\* language) and made permanent all judiciary major IT expenses to be paid through the fund - BRFA – SB 141/Chapter 484
- 2011** Increased Surcharge an additional \$20.00 to Sunset in 2015 – BRFA - HB 72/Chapter 397. This bill also authorized transfer of \$10 million from Fund to General Fund
- 2015** Sunset lifted and extended to 2020 – HB 51/Chapter 487; also
- 2015** Filing surcharges added – HB 54/CH 488:
- COA and COSA - \$11 per case;
  - Circuit Court - \$30 per civil case and \$6 to reopen; and
  - District Court - \$3 per summary ejectment and \$8 for all other civil cases
- 2020** Sunset lifted completely – BRFA/SB 192/CH 538