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# Legislative Budget and Finance Committee

A JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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## **A Study in Response to HR 2019-619: Pennsylvania Indigent Criminal Defense Services Funding and Caseloads**

### **(Objectives and Scope)**

#### **Overview**

This study is in response to House Resolution 2019-619 (HR 2019-619), which was adopted by the Pennsylvania House of Representatives on December 17, 2019. HR 619 requires the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) to conduct a comprehensive study of the funding and caseloads related to indigent criminal defense services in the Commonwealth. Indigent criminal defense is primarily a county-based responsibility; consequently, the focus of the report will be on data collection from county offices and where applicable, state judicial management authorities and/or relevant state associations. It should be noted that in 2011 the subject matter of indigent criminal defense services was studied by the Joint State Government Commission; however, at that time, the study was limited by the availability of systematic and complete data. Accordingly, our objectives for this study will be as follows:

#### **Objectives**

1. To determine the amount of funding, and sources of funding, spent on indigent criminal defense on a county-by-county basis.
2. To determine the number of indigent criminal caseloads on a county-by-county basis and by type of criminal category, where applicable.
3. To determine the number of attorneys who represent indigent clients, and to determine other applicable statistical information, including but not limited to, rates paid for court-appointed counsel and the number of full-time and part-time public defenders in each county.

#### **Scope**

Our scope will cover calendar years (CY) 2018, 2019, and 2020.