

Conference Committee Report Senate Bill 257, 2017 Appropriations Act Selected Highlights for Justice and Public Safety

The FY 2017-18 budgets for Justice and Public Safety (JPS) agencies include net appropriations of \$2.7 billion, which is \$78.1 million (3%) above the FY 2017-18 base budget and \$102.7 million (3.9%) above the FY 2018-19 base budget.

The following selected JPS highlights may be found in **Section I** of the 2017 Conference Committee Report (page and item numbers noted); selected special provisions may be found in **Part XVI through XVIII** of S.B. 257 (section references are noted):

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- Eliminates \$4.1 million in vacant positions to fund high-priority items. **(various items)**
- Provides \$ 2.3 million and 6 FTE in operating funds for Phase II of the Samarcand Training Academy. **(I-11, #8)**
- Provides \$1.2 million for a 200-bed female CRV facility in Buncombe County at the Swannanoa Correctional Center. The Department will reallocate positions to staff the facility. **(I-15, #26)**

Provisions from S.B. 257

- Expands the allowable uses of the Victims' Compensation Fund to provide grief counseling for immediate family members. **(Section 16.6)**
- Raises the age of juvenile jurisdiction to include 16-and-17-year-olds who commit misdemeanors and Class H and Class I felonies, effective December 1, 2019. The provision also creates an Advisory Committee to develop detailed cost estimates and implementation plans for the new policy, including a study of specific criminal offenses and recommendations for their possible exclusion from the juvenile system. **(Section 16D.4)**

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- Reduces the Administrative and Legal Services budgets by \$10 million. **(I-23, #36)**
- Transfers \$550,989 in receipt-supported positions to General Fund support to improve efficiency in the lab and provide more stable funding. **(I-24, #43)**
- Provides \$345,673 in recurring funding to support the requirements of the Forensic Sciences Act of 2011. **(I-24-25, #44-47)**
- Provides \$1.7 million for the State Crime Lab to purchase or lease equipment. **(I-25, #48)**

Indigent Defense Services

Provisions from S.B. 257

- Requires Indigent Defense Services (IDS) and the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to develop a workload formula for determining staffing needs at the public defender offices. **(Section 18A.2)**
- Requires IDS and AOC to develop statewide standards for determining indigency of defendants. **(Section 18A.3)**

Administrative Office of the Courts

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- Provides \$4.7 million to create 67 new deputy clerk positions in FY 2017-18 and an additional 29 new positions in FY 2018-19. **(I-40, #65)**
- Provides \$2.2 million to create 31 new assistant district attorney positions throughout the State. The funding is provided for an entry-level salary of \$50,000. **(I-41, #68)**

Provisions from S.B. 257

- Requires judges to notify all government entities that would receive funds before granting waivers for fines or court costs. **(Section 18B.6)**
- Allocates the 31 new assistant district attorney positions and eliminates District 9A, effective January 1, 2019. Person County is added to District 9 (Franklin, Granville, Vance, and Warren) and Caswell is added to District 17A (Rockingham). The provision also renumbers the prosecutorial districts from 1 to 43. **(Section 18B.9)**