

# SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

## **Item 4: Public Defense Commission Temporary Hourly Increase Program**

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To: Emergency Board  
From: Public Safety Subcommittee  
Carrier: Senator Sollman

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The Public Safety Subcommittee heard a request from the Public Defense Commission to extend the Temporary Hourly Increase Program through the end of the 2023-25 biennium.

The program was developed in July 2022 to serve as a mechanism to increase attorney and investigator capacity through enhanced hourly rates of pay above standard hourly scheduled rates of pay and is limited to in-custody defendants.

For the 2023-25 biennium, total estimated program costs with the extension are estimated at \$47.1 million General Fund, and with a current budget of only \$13.2 million, the program is projected to be in deficit, even after December 2024 Emergency Board actions. More detail from the Commission is required to determine if the deficit can be funded through another rebalance, or if additional supplemental funding will be needed during the 2025 session to fund the program for the remainder of the biennium.

Additionally, some of the program caseload will carryforward into the 2025-27 biennium, at a projected cost of \$26.9 million General Fund.

The Public Safety Subcommittee recommends that the Emergency Board allocate \$2,450,744 General Fund from the special purpose appropriation made to the Emergency Board for public defense expenses to the Public Defense Commission for extension of the Temporary Hourly Increase Program from January 1 to June 30, 2025.