

# SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

## **Item 23: Public Defense Commission Trial Representation**

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To: Ways and Means Full Committee  
From: Public Safety Subcommittee  
Carrier: Representative Evans

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The Public Safety Subcommittee heard a request from the Public Defense Commission on trial representation.

The Public Defense Commission is requesting a transfer of \$1.6 million General Fund from the Court Mandated Expenses Division to the Trial Representation Division and the establishment of six permanent full-time state attorney positions (3.00 FTE) for trial-level public defense. The request is to shift funding from private hourly-rate attorney services to state attorneys for a more efficient delivery of public defense services. Any cost savings achieved will be reinvested in additional state attorneys to expand public defense capacity and, more specifically, address the unrepresented defendant/persons crisis.

The Public Safety Subcommittee recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means recommend transferring \$1,620,484 General Fund from the Court Mandated Expenses Division to the Trial Representation Division and authorize the establishment of six permanent full-time positions (3.00 FTE) for the Public Defense Commission in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2026 legislative session for state trial-level public defense.