

No. _____

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

A JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing integrated amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in the Judiciary, further providing for the Supreme Court, the Superior Court, the Commonwealth Court and for judicial districts and boundaries.

INTRODUCED _____ 20 _____

By _____ District NO. _____

By _____ District NO. _____

By _____ District NO. _____

By _____ District NO. _____

See next page for additional co-sponsors.

Referred to Committee on	
Date _____	20 _____
Reported _____	20 _____
As Committed-Amended	
Recommendation	

By Hon. _____	

A JOINT RESOLUTION

1 Proposing integrated amendments to the Constitution of the
2 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in the Judiciary, further
3 providing for the Supreme Court, the Superior Court, the
4 Commonwealth Court and for judicial districts and boundaries.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby resolves as follows:

7 Section 1. The following integrated amendments to the
8 Constitution of Pennsylvania are proposed in accordance with
9 Article XI:

10 (1) That section 2 of Article V be amended to read:

11 § 2. Supreme Court.

12 The Supreme Court (a) shall be the highest court of the
13 Commonwealth and in this court shall be reposed the supreme
14 judicial power of the Commonwealth;

15 (b) shall consist of seven justices, to be elected from
16 seven judicial districts which shall be established by law, one
17 of whom shall be the Chief Justice; and

1 (c) shall have such jurisdiction as shall be provided by
2 law.

3 (2) That section 3 of Article V be amended to read:

4 § 3. Superior Court.

5 The Superior Court shall be a statewide court, and shall
6 consist of [the number of judges, which shall be not less than
7 seven judges] 15 judges, to be elected from 15 judicial
8 districts which shall be established by law, and have such
9 jurisdiction as shall be provided by this Constitution or by the
10 General Assembly. One of its judges shall be the president
11 judge.

12 (3) That section 4 of Article V be amended to read:

13 § 4. Commonwealth Court.

14 The Commonwealth Court shall be a statewide court, and shall
15 consist of [the number of judges] nine judges, to be elected
16 from nine judicial districts which shall be established by law,
17 and have such jurisdiction as shall be provided by law. One of
18 its judges shall be the president judge.

19 (4) That section 11 of Article V be amended to read:

20 § 11. Judicial districts; boundaries.

21 [The number and boundaries of judicial districts shall be
22 changed by the General Assembly only with the advice and consent
23 of the Supreme Court.]

24 (a) The number of judges and justices of the Supreme Court,
25 the Superior Court and the Commonwealth Court elected from each
26 judicial district shall provide every resident of the
27 Commonwealth with approximately equal representation on a court.
28 Each judicial district shall be composed of compact and
29 contiguous territory as nearly equal in population as
30 practicable. Each judicial district shall elect one judge or

1 justice. Unless absolutely necessary, no county, city,
2 incorporated town, borough, township or ward may be divided in
3 forming a judicial district.

4 (b) The General Assembly shall, by law, establish:

5 (1) The judicial districts from which justices of the
6 Supreme Court and the judges of the Superior Court and the
7 Commonwealth Court are elected.

8 (2) A transition to an appellate court judiciary elected
9 from judicial districts.

10 (3) The effect of set judicial districts upon eligibility to
11 seek retention election.

12 (4) The order in which judicial districts shall elect
13 justices of the Supreme Court and judges of the Superior Court
14 and the Commonwealth Court.

15 (5) The decennial realignment of the appellate judicial
16 districts based on the Federal decennial census, beginning in
17 2021 and occurring each ten years thereafter.

18 (c) Residency qualification for election or appointment to
19 the Supreme Court, the Superior Court and the Commonwealth Court
20 shall be established by the General Assembly.

21 (d) Except as provided under subsection (b) and section
22 7(b), the number and boundaries of all other judicial districts
23 shall be established by the General Assembly by law, with the
24 advice and consent of the Supreme Court.

25 Section 2. (a) Upon the first passage by the General
26 Assembly of these proposed constitutional amendments, the
27 Secretary of the Commonwealth shall proceed immediately to
28 comply with the advertising requirements of section 1 of Article
29 XI of the Constitution of Pennsylvania and shall transmit the
30 required advertisements to two newspapers in every county in

1 which such newspapers are published in sufficient time after
2 passage of these proposed constitutional amendments.

3 (b) Upon the second passage by the General Assembly of these
4 proposed constitutional amendments, the Secretary of the
5 Commonwealth shall proceed immediately to comply with the
6 advertising requirements of section 1 of Article XI of the
7 Constitution of Pennsylvania and shall transmit the required
8 advertisements to two newspapers in every county in which such
9 newspapers are published in sufficient time after passage of
10 these proposed constitutional amendments. The Secretary of the
11 Commonwealth shall submit the proposed constitutional amendments
12 under section 1 to the qualified electors of this Commonwealth
13 as a single ballot question at the first primary, general or
14 municipal election which meets the requirements of and is in
15 conformance with section 1 of Article XI of the Constitution of
16 Pennsylvania and which occurs at least three months after the
17 proposed constitutional amendments are passed by the General
18 Assembly.