



H.R. 5551 – To amend title 11, District of Columbia Official Code, to implement the increase provided under the District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2008, in the amount of funds made available for the compensation of attorneys representing indigent defendants in the District of Columbia courts, and for other purposes

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 5551 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Danny Davis (D-IL) on March 6, 2008. The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform ordered the bill to be reported by voice vote on March 13, 2008.

H.R. 5551 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on April 1, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R. 5551 amends the Title 11 of the DC Official Code by increasing the compensation of attorneys representing indigent defendants in all DC Courts from a rate of \$65 per hour to \$80 per hour.

Additionally, H.R. 5551 amends the DC Official Code by limiting the total amount of compensation attorneys may receive at the increased hourly rate while representing indigent defendants before the Superior Court for DC and the DC Court of Appeals for misdemeanors and felonies. The bill sets the maximum amount of compensation to be the same as those for attorneys representing a defendant before the U.S. magistrate judge or the district court for misdemeanors or felonies. These same compensation levels are also to be applied to post-trial representation matters.

BACKGROUND

Maximum compensation levels for an attorney representing indigent defendants before the U.S. magistrate judge or district court for misdemeanors or felonies are \$7,000 in a case in which one or more felonies are charged, and \$2,000 in a case in which only misdemeanors are charged. Attorneys representing indigent defendants before an appellate court are not to be compensated above \$5,000 in each appellate court.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that enacting H.R. 5551 would cost about \$7 million in 2009 and \$35 million over the 2009-2013 period, subject to the appropriation of the necessary amounts.

[CBO cost estimate for H.R. 5551](#)

STAFF CONTACT

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