

HB 4001 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Prepared By: John Borden, Budget Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure establishes the Task Force on Specialty Courts and specifies certain issues relating to specialty courts that the task force is directed to study.

Detailed Summary:

Establishes the Task Force on Specialty Courts (the Task Force) and specifies membership appointments of 19 members. Directs the Task Force to study certain issues concerning specialty courts. Requires the Task Force to submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the interim committee of the Legislative Assembly related to the judiciary no later than November 15, 2024. States that the Director of the Legislative Policy and Research Office shall provide staff support to the task force. Provides that members of the Task Force are volunteers and not entitled to compensation or reimbursement for expenses. Repeals provision on December 31, 2024. Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Specialty courts as defined as problem-solving courts that operate under a specialized model to provide court-directed supervision and mandated treatment to nonviolent individuals with substance use or mental health issues underlying their criminal behavior. Specialty Court judges typically impose a strenuous regimen of treatment and accountability that requires a strong personal commitment from participants to take control of their lives to eliminate substance use and sustain a crime-free lifestyle. All specialty courts have the following in common: they serve a specific, targeted population with agreed-upon eligibility criteria; they rely on consistent judicial interaction throughout the duration of the program; and they require collaboration among a multidisciplinary team made up of judicial, treatment, supervision, legal staff, and other parties.

The ad hoc growth in specialty courts merit review in terms of statutory authority, programmatic structure, coordination of funding, standardization of best practices and expected outcomes, measurements of actual performance, and legislative oversight.