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January 29, 2025

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**S.B. No. 428: RELATING TO WITNESS FEES**

**LATE**

**Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary:**

The Office of the Public Defender **supports S.B. No. 428**

The Office of the Public Defender submits that there is a need to increase the compensation to witnesses in criminal cases. The increase from \$20 to \$40 is an acknowledgment that witnesses are a critical part of the administration of justice. It is understood that the fee is nominal. However, this increase helps offset the time away from work and family that witnesses spend participating in criminal proceedings.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.