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Memorandum

To: Livingston County Board of Commissioners
From: Karen Groenhout, Livingston County Public Defender
Date: January 14, 2022
Re: Resolution Authorizing the Creation of a Public Defender II Position.

Historically, the Livingston County Public Defender's Office has used outside contract attorneys to cover 625 felony cases annually. Because of attrition, in the year 2022 outside counsel will cover 500 felony cases. Therefore, the Public Defender's Office needs to provide coverage for an additional 125 felony cases annually. Currently, the staff attorneys in the Public Defender's Office have the maximum number of cases allowed by the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission annually (150 felony and/or 400 misdemeanor cases). Therefore, the Public Defender's Office is unable to absorb the additional 125 cases without adding an attorney position.

If the Public Defender's Office has an additional attorney, it will be able to provide defense counsel services to the Livingston County's Specialty Courts. Thereby saving the General Fund dollars that the County pays outside counsel for these defense services. It costs the Public Defender's Office \$150,000 to contract with outside counsel for 120 felony cases. Hiring a Public Defender II position will cost approximately \$120,000 (including benefits) and the funding for this change will be through an amendment in the MIDC grant moving the funds from contracts to personnel. Therefore, if the Public Defender's Office hires a new Public Defender II position it will be 100% grant funded and will save Livingston County general fund dollars.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact me directly.