

No. 1998-67

## AN ACT

SB 770

Amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for audio-video arraignment.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Title 42 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a section to read:

**§ 8703. Arraignment.**

*(a) General rule.—The arraignment of the defendant may be satisfied, in the discretion of the court, either by the physical appearance of the defendant before the court or by two-way electronic audio-video communication. The audio-video communication must operate so that the defendant and the judge can see each other simultaneously and converse with each other. If the defendant has counsel, the defendant shall be allowed to communicate fully and confidentially with his attorney during the proceeding. A judge may order the defendant to physically appear in court for the arraignment.*

*(b) Court rules.—Except for the provisions of this section, arraignments shall be in the form and in the manner as provided by court rule.*

Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.

APPROVED—The 11th day of June, A.D. 1998.

THOMAS J. RIDGE