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## Appropriations Committee

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### HB 1961

**Brief Description:** Extending the expiration date for judicial stabilization trust account surcharges.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Pedersen, Rodne, Hudgins, Hunter and Ryu; by request of Board For Judicial Administration.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extends the expiration date for surcharges on court filing fees that are deposited into the Judicial Stabilization Trust Account until July 1, 2015.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 2/28/13

**Staff:** Alex MacBain (786-7288).

**Background:**

Superior and district courts are authorized by statute to collect filing fees and other fees for court services. Revenue from superior court filing fees is split with 46 percent going to the state and the remainder going to the county and the county or regional law library. Revenue from district court filing fees is split with 32 percent going to the state and the remainder going to the county and the county or regional law library.

Legislation enacted in 2009 authorized temporary surcharges on filing fees in superior and district courts. Superior court filings were subject to a \$30 surcharge, except filings of an appeal from a court of limited jurisdiction, where the surcharge was \$20. District court filings were subject to a \$20 surcharge, except small claims filings, which were subject to a \$10 surcharge.

Legislation enacted in 2011 extended the surcharges until June 30, 2013, and split the revenue from the surcharges between the state and the county collecting the fee, with 75 percent going to the state and 25 percent going to the county. Local revenue going to the counties from the surcharges must be used to support local trial courts and court-related costs. Legislation enacted

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in 2012 generally increased the temporary surcharges on filing fees by \$10. The surcharges are set to expire on July 1, 2013.

The state revenue from surcharges must be remitted to the State Treasurer for deposit into the Judicial Stabilization Trust Account (Account). Expenditures from the Account may only be used for the support of judicial branch agencies. During the 2011-13 biennium, an estimated \$10.6 million will be deposited into the Account. Funds from the Account are appropriated for expenditures in the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Office of Public Defense, and the Office of Civil Legal Aid.

**Summary of Bill:**

The expiration date for surcharges on superior court and district court filings is extended until July 1, 2015.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 22, 2013.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 2013.