

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 2236

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Law & Justice, February 14, 1996

**Title:** An act relating to superior court judges.

**Brief Description:** Providing two superior court positions for Thurston county.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Johnson, Wolfe and Romero; by request of Administrator for the Courts).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Law & Justice: 2/14/96 [DPA].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Smith, Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Goings, Haugen, Johnson, Long, McCaslin and Schow.

**Staff:** Dick Armstrong (786-7460)

**Background:** The Legislature sets by statute the number of superior court judges in each county. Periodically, the office of the Administrator for the Courts conducts a weighted caseload study to determine the need for additional judges in the various counties. Currently, Thurston County has six judges. The weighted caseload analysis by the Administrator for the Courts indicates a need, as of 1995, for 9.25 judges in the county.

Retirement system benefits and one-half of the salary of a superior court judge are paid by the state. The other half of the judge's salary and all other costs associated with a judicial position, such as capital and support staff costs, are borne by the county.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** The number of superior court judges in Thurston County is increased from six to eight. One of the new judicial positions takes effect July 1, 1996, and the other July 1, 2000.

The new positions become effective only if the legislative authority of Thurston County agrees that the county will pay its share of the cost of the positions without reimbursement from the state.

**Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The initial judicial position takes effect July 1, 1996, instead of February 1, 1997.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains the following effective dates: one judicial position created by section 1 is effective July 1, 1996; the second position is effective July 1, 2000.

**Testimony For:** Thurston County needs the two additional judges to handle its workload.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative Johnson, original prime sponsor.