

# HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

## HB 2721

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**Title:** An act relating to venue of actions by or against counties.

**Brief Description:** Changing provisions relating to venue of actions by or against counties.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Morris, Schoesler, Grant, Mastin, Quall, Dunn and Anderson.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Modifies venue available for suit by or against a county.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**Staff:** Mark Friendshuh (786-7291).

#### Background:

A party may sue a county in the superior court of that county or the superior court of either of the two nearest counties. Counties have the option to sue in the defendant's home county or in either of the two counties nearest the county initiating the action.

"The nearest county" is measured by travel time between county seats via major surface routes as determined by the Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC). The OAC uses data provided by the Department of Transportation to determine the travel time between county seats via highways and car ferries.

Some superior court districts contain two or more counties, which, therefore, share a judge. In some counties, one of the two nearest county seats is in the same court district, providing only one alternative venue outside the district. In Garfield County, both of the two nearest county seats are within the same court district, providing no alternative district.

#### Summary of Bill:

The superior court venues available for an action involving a county as a party are changed from "nearest counties" to "nearest judicial districts." For an action taken by

or against a county in a multi-county superior court district, this change would assure two alternative superior court venues.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Office of Program Research