Washington State House of Representatives Office of Program Research	BILL ANALYSIS

Judiciary Committee

HJR 4224

Brief Description: Amending the Constitution to require election of judges at the general election.

Sponsors: Representatives Hinkle and Dunn.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Proposes an amendment to Article IV, section 29 of the Washington Constitution, to remove the requirement that a certificate of election be issued to a superior court judge candidate who is entitled to have only his or her name appear on the ballot after a contested primary.

Hearing Date: 1/30/06

Staff: Edie Adams (786-7180).

Background:

Article IV, section 29 of the Washington Constitution governs election of superior court judges. There are two components to this provision, one dealing with uncontested positions and the other with contested positions.

In a county with a population of 100,000 or more, if only one candidate has filed for any single position of superior court judge, a primary is not held for the position and the candidate is issued a certificate of election.

In any county, if after a contested primary for superior court judge only one candidate is entitled to have his or her name printed on the general election ballot for a single position, no election is held as to that position, and the candidate is issued a certificate of election. The certificate of election is not issued if a write-in campaign submits a petition of 100 signatures within 10 days after the primary.

Under the state's election laws, a candidate for superior court judge is entitled to have only his or her name on the general election ballot if that candidate receives a majority of votes cast for that position in a contested primary election.

Summary of Bill:

An amendment is proposed to Article IV, section 29 of the Washington Constitution, which deals with election of superior court judges. The proposed amendment removes the requirement that a

certificate of election be issued to a superior court judge candidate who is entitled to have only his or her name appear on the ballot after a contested primary.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.