

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1202

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Judiciary, March 29, 2005

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

**Brief Description:** Creating additional district court judge positions.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Williams, Woods, Lantz, Hunt, Campbell, Appleton, McCune, Eickmeyer, Ormsby and Kilmer; by request of Board For Judicial Administration.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/04/05, 96-0.

**Committee Activity:** Judiciary: 3/17/05, 3/29/05 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kline, Chair; Weinstein, Vice Chair; Johnson, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Esser, McCaslin, Rasmussen and Thibaudeau.

**Staff:** Cindy Fazio (786-7405)

**Background:** The number of district court judges in each county is set by statute. Any change in the number of judges in a county must be made by the Legislature after receiving a recommendation from the Supreme Court. The recommendation must be based on an objective workload analysis conducted by the Administrative Office of the Courts. The analysis takes into account available judicial resources and the caseload activity of the court. The workload analysis for Kitsap County District Court recommends 4.27 judicial officers; the county has three district judges. The workload analysis for Thurston County District Court recommends 3.9 judicial officers; the county has two district judges.

Clark County has six district judge positions. The last position was authorized in 2003 but was not phased in by the county within two years of authorization as allowed by statute.

Counties pay all costs associated with a district court judge position. The county may phase in a newly authorized judge position over a two year period.

**Summary of Bill:** Clark County's sixth district judge position is recreated as of the effective date of this bill. Clark County has another two year period to agree to the funding of the position and fill the position. Kitsap County's number of judges is increased from three to four. Thurston County's number of judges is increased from two to three.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Testimony For:** Both Kitsap and Thurston counties are prepared to implement the positions. The existing judges support creating the positions.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Representative Brendan Williams, prime sponsor; Judge Marilyn Paja, Kitsap County District Court; Jeff Hall, Board for Judicial Administration.