

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 5046

C 22 L 13
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Modifying the mandatory retirement provision for district judges.

Sponsors: Senators Padden, Kline, Keiser, Harper, Shin and Kohl-Welles.

Senate Committee on Law & Justice
House Committee on Judiciary

Background: District courts have jurisdiction over both criminal and civil cases. Criminal jurisdiction includes misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor cases that involve traffic or non-traffic offenses. Examples include driving while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs (DUI), reckless driving, driving with a suspended driver's license, and assault in the fourth degree. Preliminary hearings for felony cases are also within the jurisdiction of the district courts.

Jurisdiction in civil cases includes damages for injury to individuals or personal property and contract disputes in amounts of up to \$75,000. District courts also have jurisdiction over traffic and non-traffic infractions, defined as civil proceedings for which a monetary penalty, but no jail sentence, may be imposed. District courts have jurisdiction to issue domestic violence and antiharassment protection orders and no-contact orders. They also have jurisdiction to hear change-of-name petitions and certain lien foreclosures. Small claims are limited to money claims of up to \$5,000. These are filed and heard in the Small Claims Department of the district court.

District court judges are elected to four year terms. If a district court judge vacancy occurs during a term of office for any reason, the county legislative authority fills the vacancy by appointment, and the judge holds office until the next general election. District court judges must retire from office at the end of the calendar year in which the judge reaches the age of 75.

Summary: Instead of requiring that a district court judge must retire from office at the end of the calendar year in which the judge reaches the age of 75, the judge is allowed to serve until the expiration of the judge's term of office.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 48 0

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

House 92 0

Effective: July 28, 2013.