

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SB 5052

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Increasing the number of superior court judges in Whatcom county.

**Sponsors:** Senators Ericksen, Ranker, Shin, Padden and Kohl-Welles; by request of Board For Judicial Administration.

**Senate Committee on Law & Justice**

**House Committee on Judiciary**

**House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government**

**Background:** The number of superior court judges in Washington counties is authorized by statute. The Administrator for the Courts examines the need for new superior court judge positions under an objective workload analysis. The analysis is a statistical model based on workload. The two key components in the analysis are the processed caseload and the number of available judicial officers. Once the analysis is complete, the Board for Judicial Administration reviews the results and makes recommendations to the Legislature.

Article 4, section 13 of the Washington State Constitution provides that the state and the county share the cost for superior court judges. A superior court judge's benefits and one-half of the salary are paid by the state. The county pays one-half of the judge's salary.

Currently, Whatcom County has three superior court judges.

**Summary:** An additional judicial position is created in Whatcom County, changing the number of superior court judges from three to four. The addition of this judicial position is contingent on Whatcom County documenting its approval of the position by county legislative authority, and agreeing that Whatcom County pay for the expenses of the position without compensation from the state.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	48	1
House	91	6

**Effective:** July 28, 2013.

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*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.*