

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 5981

C 169 L 14
Synopsis as Enacted

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

Sponsors: Senators Sheldon, Kline, Hewitt and Dammeier; by request of Board For Judicial Administration.

Senate Committee on Law & Justice

House Committee on Judiciary

House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government & Information Technology

Background: The number of superior court judges in each county is set by statute. Any change in the number of full- and part-time judges in a county's superior court is determined by the Legislature after receiving a recommendation from the Board for Judicial Administration (BJA). The BJA's recommendation is based on an objective workload analysis developed annually by the Administrative Office of the Courts. The objective workload analysis takes into account available judicial resources and the caseload activity of the court.

Superior court judges and court commissioners hear felony and other criminal matters, civil matters, domestic relations matters, guardianship and probate matters, juvenile matters as well as child dependency cases, appeals from lower courts, and appeals from state administrative agencies. Mason County has two elected superior court judges.

The state and the county share the cost of superior court judges. In order for an additional judicial position to become effective, the legislative authority of the affected county must approve the position and agree to pay, out of county funds and without reimbursement from the state, expenses associated with the new position.

Summary: The number of statutorily authorized superior court judges in Mason County is increased from two to three. This new position becomes effective only if Mason County approves the position and agrees that the county pay its share of the cost of the position without reimbursement from the state.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 49 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 5

Effective: June 12, 2014