

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1176

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to the number of District Court judges.

Brief Description: Authorizing Benton county to have one additional District Court judge.

Sponsors: Representatives Delvin, Hickel, Sheahan, Appelwick, Dellwo, Hankins, Mastin, Honeyford and Padden.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Law & Justice: 1/24/95, 1/31/95 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/17/95, 94-0.

Senate Amended.

House Concurred.

Passed Legislature.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Padden, Chair; Delvin, Vice Chair; Hickel, Vice Chair; Appelwick, Ranking Minority Member; Costa, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Carrell; Chappell; Cody; Lambert; McMahan; Morris; Robertson; Sheahan; Smith and Veloria.

Staff: Pat Shelledy (786-7149).

Background: Before a county may increase the number of District Court judges, the Legislature must approve the increase. The Supreme Court makes a recommendation to the Legislature and bases its recommendation on a weighted caseload analysis. Additional judgeships are effective only if the county legislative authority approves the additional position and agrees to pay for the position with county funds without reimbursement from the state.

The Benton County commissioners have approved the addition of one, full-time Benton County District Court Judge, based on a weighted caseload analysis.

Douglas County has two authorized positions. Apparently the 1994 legislation that authorized the second position was enacted by mistake.

Summary of Bill: The number of District Court judges in Benton County is increased from two to three. The number of District Court judges in Douglas County is reduced from two to one.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 20, 1995.

Effective Date: Immediately.

Testimony For: Benton County's request for another District Court judge is supported by the weighted caseload analysis and approved by the county legislative authority.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Judge Eugene Pratt, Benton County District Court (pro).