

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJR 8200

AS OF JANUARY 31, 1991

Brief Description: Amending the Constitution to remove the special provisions for superior court elections.

SPONSORS: Senators Nelson, Talmadge, Thorsness and Rasmussen.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Staff: Dick Armstrong (786-7460)

Hearing Dates: February 7, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Current statutory law provides that if a candidate for justice or judge in the primary receives a majority of all the votes cast for the position, only the name of the person receiving the highest vote total is printed on the general election ballot. However, in the case of candidates for superior court judge, Article IV, Section 29 of the Washington State Constitution supersedes the statute in two instances: (1) in counties containing a population of 100,000 or more, if only one candidate has filed as of the last day for withdrawals of candidacy, no primary or election is held and the candidate receives a certificate of election; and, (2) if, in any county having a contested primary, only one candidate is entitled to have his or her name printed on the general election ballot for any single position, there is no election for that position and the candidate receives a certificate of election.

It is suggested that superior court judges should be elected in the same manner as other judges.

SUMMARY:

Article IV, Section 29 of the Washington State Constitution, which establishes special exemptions from primary and general elections for superior court judges, is repealed. Superior court judges are elected in the same manner as other judges.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested