

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5753

As Reported By House Committee On:
Judiciary

Title: An act relating to superior courts.

Brief Description: Creating a new judgeship for Cowlitz County.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Snyder and L. Smith).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Judiciary, March 30, 1993, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Appelwick, Chair; Ludwig, Vice Chair; Padden, Ranking Minority Member; Ballasiotes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell; Chappell; Forner; Johanson; Long; Mastin; H. Myers; Riley; Schmidt; Scott; Tate; and Wineberry.

Staff: Patricia Shelledy (786-7149).

Background: Cowlitz County currently has three Superior Court judges. The third judge was added in 1981. Cowlitz County has experienced growth in the number of cases filed and tried in Superior Court. The county does employ a part-time commissioner.

The Washington State administrator for the courts has estimated that Cowlitz County needs 3.9 Superior Court judges to handle the current case load.

The Washington State Constitution provides that the state and counties split the salary expense for Superior Court judges.

Summary of Bill: An additional Superior Court judge is authorized for Cowlitz County, increasing the number of Superior Court judges in Cowlitz County from three to four.

The additional Superior Court judge becomes effective only if Cowlitz County authorizes the payment of the county's expenses associated with the new position.

The act does not indicate the starting date for the position. The fiscal note was prepared assuming a January 1, 1994 starting date for the new position.

The act is contingent upon funding provided in the Omnibus Appropriations Act.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void if not funded in the budget.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: None.