

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2538

Title: An act relating to superior court judges.

Brief Description: Creating a new superior court position for Lewis county.

Sponsors: Representatives Alexander, DeBolt, Sheahan and Appelwick.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Staff: Bill Perry (786-7123).

Background: The Legislature sets by statute the number of superior court judges in each county. Periodically, the Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC) conducts a weighted caseload analysis to determine the need for additional judges in the various counties. The Legislature has authorized two judges for Lewis County. The caseload analysis by the OAC indicates a need for an additional judicial position in Lewis County.

Retirement benefits and one-half of the salary and other employee benefits of a superior court judge are paid by the state. The other half of the judge's salary and all other costs associated with a judicial position, such as capital and support staff costs, are borne by the county.

New superior court positions are filled by gubernatorial appointment. The appointed judge must then stand for election at the next general election.

Summary of Bill: The number of superior court judges in Lewis County is increased from two to three. The new position takes effect January 1, 1999, but upon request of the superior court, the Lewis County commissioners may set the actual starting date for the position.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Office of Program Research