

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1313

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As of March 31, 1997

**Title:** An act relating to superior court judges.

**Brief Description:** Providing for additional judges for the Pierce county superior court.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Representatives McDonald, Sheahan, Bush, Robertson, Conway, Lantz and Talcott).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Law & Justice: 4/3/97.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

**Staff:** Dick Armstrong (786-7460)

**Background:** The Legislature sets by statute the number of superior court judges in each county. Periodically, the Office of the Administrator for the Courts conducts a weighted caseload study to determine the need for additional judges in the various counties. Pierce County has 19 judges. The weighted caseload analysis by the Administrator for the Courts indicates a need, as of 1996, for an additional 8.37 judicial officers in the county.

Retirement benefits and one-half of the salary 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.

**Summary of Bill:** The number of statutorily authorized judicial positions in Pierce County is increased from 19 to 24. One of the additional judicial positions takes effect January 1, 1998, two take effect on January 1, 1999, and two take effect on January 1, 2000.

The actual starting dates for the additional judicial positions must be established by the Pierce County Council upon request by the superior court and by recommendation of the Pierce County Executive.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains several effective dates. Please refer to the bill.