

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1398

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As of March 31, 1997

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

**Brief Description:** Creating additional judicial positions in the Spokane superior court.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Benson, Sheahan, Sump, Wood, O'Brien and Gombosky; by request of Administrator for the Courts.

**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. Spokane County has 11 statutorily authorized judges. The weighted caseload analysis by the Administrator for the Courts indicates a need, as of 1996, for an additional 3.37 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 Spokane County is increased from 11 to 13. The additional judicial positions take effect upon the effective date of the act, but the actual starting dates must be established by the Spokane County Commissioners upon the request of the superior court.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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