

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 6492

C 270 L 98

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating two new superior court positions for Yakima county.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Newhouse, Deccio, Johnson, Loveland and McCaslin; by request of Board for Judicial Administration).

Senate Committee on Law & Justice

House Committee on Law & Justice

House Committee on Appropriations

Background: Current law authorizes six superior court judge positions in Yakima County. The weighted caseload analysis performed by the Office of the Administrator for the Courts revealed Yakima County's judicial caseload supports 13.8 judicial positions. The Board of Yakima County Commissioners has requested that the statute be amended to authorize eight superior court judges in Yakima County.

Summary: The number of judges in Yakima County is increased from six to eight. The number of judges in Clark County is increased from seven to eight. The number of judges in Lewis County is increased from two to three. In each case, the new positions take effect immediately, but upon request of the superior court, the county commissioners may set the actual starting date for the positions.

The five judicial positions (three of which are currently filled) that are authorized in the Chelan County and Douglas County joint superior court are reallocated. Four positions are authorized in Chelan County and one position is authorized in Douglas County. The three currently filled positions are allocated to Chelan County effective upon the appointment of a judge in Douglas County to one of the unfilled positions. The remaining unfilled position is allocated to Chelan County. The two authorized, but currently unfilled, positions become effective only if each of the counties through its legislative authority documents its approval of the new position and agrees to pay the expenses of the position as provided for by state law.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	0
House	97	0
House	96	0 (House reconsidered)

Effective: April 1, 1998