

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6580

As of January 29, 1998

Title: An act relating to education requirements for members of the commission on judicial conduct.

Brief Description: Developing education requirements for members of the commission on judicial conduct.

Sponsors: Senators Roach, Heavey, Benton, Patterson, Fairley, Hargrove, Fraser, Stevens, Zarelli, Goings, Oke, Rossi, Horn, Swecker and Morton.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 2/2/98.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Staff: Dick Armstrong (786-7460)

Background: The Commission on Judicial Conduct has the responsibility of determining whether a judge has violated a rule of judicial conduct or if the judge suffers from a permanent disability which interferes with the performance of judicial duties.

The commission may admonish, reprimand or censure a judge or recommend to the Supreme Court the suspension, removal, or retirement of the judge.

The commission consists of 11 members, six members who are non-attorneys and five members who are either an attorney or a judge.

At the present time there are no mandatory educational requirements for commission members. The commission provides a four-hour orientation program for new members, and members attend educational seminars as allowed by the commission's budget.

It has been suggested that the public, attorneys, and judges would have more confidence in the decision of the commission if the members received more education and training.

Summary of Bill: Members of the Commission on Judicial Conduct are required to obtain 15 hours of judicial education beginning January 1, 2000. In addition, new members of the commission must attend an orientation program. The Board of Court Education must develop or approve the education and orientation requirements.

The commission must develop rules to implement the act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 28, 1998.

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