FINAL BILL REPORT
ESB 5036

C 245 L 99
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Adding a judge to the superior courts of Okanogan and Grant counties.

Sponsors: Senators McCaslin and Heavey; by request of Board for Judicial Administration.

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on Judiciary
House Committee on Appropriations

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 one judge for Okanogan County and two judges for Grant County. The caseload analysis by the OAC indicates a need for an additional judicial position in each of the two counties.

One-half of the salary and retirement benefits of a superior court judge are paid by the state. The other half of the judge's salary, half of retirement benefits, 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: The number of superior court judges in Okanogan County is increased from one to two. The number of superior court judges in Grant County is increased from two to three. The new positions take effect only upon approval by the legislative authority in each county. The additional judicial position in Okanogan County is effective only if the county agrees to pay the expenses of existing judicial positions as required by state law.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46	0	
House	95	0	(House amended)
Senate	47	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 25, 1999