

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6412

As Passed House:

March 3, 2006

Title: An act relating to superior court judges.

Brief Description: Increasing the number of superior court judges in Clallam and Cowlitz counties.

Sponsors: By Senators Doumit, Zarelli and Hargrove.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/23/06 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/3/06, 97-1.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases the number of superior court judicial positions in Clallam County from two to three.
- Increases the number of superior court judicial positions in Cowlitz County from four to five.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Alexander, Ranking Minority Member; McDonald, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buri, Clements, Cody, Conway, Darneille, Dunshee, Haigh, Hinkle, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, McDermott, McIntire, Miloscia, Pearson, Priest, Schual-Berke, P. Sullivan, Talcott and Walsh.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Owen Rowe (786-7391).

Background:

The Legislature sets by statute the number of superior court judges in each county. The state and the counties share the costs of the superior courts. 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.

Periodically, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) does a workload analysis of the superior courts to determine if additional judicial positions are needed.

Clallam County has two statutorily authorized judges, and Cowlitz County has four statutorily authorized judges. The workload analysis conducted by the AOC indicates a need for an additional judge in each county.

Summary of Bill:

One additional superior court judge is authorized in Clallam County, and one additional superior court judge is authorized in Cowlitz County. The additional judicial positions take effect only when each county documents its approval of an additional position and agrees to pay the county's share of the costs for the position without reimbursement from the state.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which the bill is passed.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.