

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJR 8207

As Passed Senate, March 11, 2005

Brief Description: Changing the membership of the commission on judicial conduct.

Sponsors: Senators Kline, Esser, Hargrove, Carrell and Johnson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Judiciary: 2/9/05, 2/16/05 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/11/05, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kline, Chair; Weinstein, Vice Chair; Johnson, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Esser, Hargrove, McCaslin, Rasmussen and Thibaudeau.

Staff: Lilah Amos (786-7429)

Background: A Commission on Judicial Conduct is created in the Washington State Constitution. The commission is given authority to investigate complaints against judges and to hold hearings to determine if a judge or justice should be disciplined for violation of a rule of judicial conduct. The commission is composed of 11 members, one of whom is a district court judge selected by all district court judges in the state. Municipal court judges are not given an opportunity for representation on the commission.

Summary of Bill: A proposed constitutional amendment changes the composition of the Commission on Judicial Conduct. One member will be selected by and from the judges of courts of limited jurisdiction instead of district courts. Judges of courts of limited jurisdiction include both district and municipal court judges.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Testimony For: This is a reasonable membership change which would allow municipal court judges to have a voice in the commission which governs them.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Fred Hellberg, Commission on Judicial Conduct; Brett Buckley, District and Municipal Court Judges Association.