

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## HB 2681

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Allowing compensation for part-time judges' judicial services.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Goodman, Rodne and Kelley.

**House Committee on Judiciary**  
**Senate Committee on Judiciary**

### **Background:**

District courts are county courts that have jurisdiction over misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor criminal cases and most civil actions involving claims of \$75,000 or less. District court judges are elected to four-year terms. In order to serve as a district court judge, a person must be a registered voter of the district court district and an attorney admitted to practice law in Washington. In a district with a population of less than 5,000, the person does not have to be an attorney if the person has passed the qualifying exam for lay judges by January 1, 2003. There are 88 full-time district judges and 24 part-time district judges serving in the district courts.

When a district judge is unable to serve due to an absence, disqualification, or other reason, the district court may appoint a judge *pro tempore* to temporarily serve in place of the district judge, or the district court may "borrow" a district judge from another district court on a temporary basis.

A judge *pro tempore* must meet the same requirements as a district judge, except that a judge *pro tempore* need not be a registered voter of the district. Compensation for a district judge *pro tempore* is determined by the local legislative authority.

A district judge may temporarily provide judicial services in another district court if the judge is able to be absent from the judge's own district and the county legislative authority approves the absence of the judge. A visiting district judge is entitled to reimbursement for subsistence, lodging, and travel expenses. These expenses are paid by the visited district and must be approved in advance by the county legislative authority for the visited district.

### **Summary:**

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

A visiting part-time district judge may receive compensation for judicial services if the county legislative authority in the visited district approves the payment in advance and the visiting judge is not serving in a judicial capacity in the judge's own district.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	97	0	
Senate	39	0	(Senate amended)
House	97	0	(House concurred)

**Effective:** June 10, 2010