

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5488

As of February 9, 2009

Title: An act relating to judicial elections.

Brief Description: Modifying judicial election provisions.

Sponsors: Senators Kline, Carrell, Eide and Roach.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Judiciary: 2/06/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Staff: Brandon Roché (786-7405)

Background: If only one or two candidates for District Court Judge file for office, the position does not appear on the primary election ballot and only appears on the general election ballot. If there are more than two candidates, a primary is held. If a candidate receives a majority of the votes cast in the primary, only that candidate's name appears on the general election ballot.

Any vacancies occurring in a municipal court seat are filled by the mayor and the appointment is for the duration of the unexpired term.

Summary of Bill: If only one or two candidates for any court of limited jurisdiction file for office, the position does not appear on the primary election ballot and only appears on the general election ballot. If there are more than two candidates, a primary is held. If one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast in the primary, only that candidate's name appears on the general election ballot.

In order to fill the balance of a vacated term of office, mayoral appointments to a vacant municipal court seat must stand for election at the next general election following the appointment.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: We support this bill because it brings municipal judges in line with all other judicial seats by making the laws between the courts similar.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Judge Brett Buckley, District and Municipal Court Judges Association.