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## Judiciary Committee

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### HB 2097

**Title:** An act relating to fees in courts of limited jurisdiction.

**Brief Description:** Revising the authority to charge fees in courts of limited jurisdiction.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kirby, Rodne, Goodman and Walkinshaw.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grants district courts and municipal courts the same authority as superior courts to require a convicted defendant to pay jury fees.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 1/13/16

**Staff:** Cece Clynch (786-7195).

**Background:**

Trial Courts.

The Washington State Constitution provides for the establishment of superior courts, and grants the Legislature authority to create other courts of limited jurisdiction. The Legislature has exercised this authority, creating district courts and municipal courts.

District courts have concurrent jurisdiction with superior courts in misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor actions committed in their respective counties and of all violations of city ordinances. They also have jurisdiction in civil actions if, for each claimant, the value or the amount at issue does not exceed \$100,000. The district courts have jurisdiction in matters involving traffic, non-traffic, and parking ordinances. In addition, district courts handle civil anti-harassment matters.

Municipal courts have jurisdiction over violations of city ordinances, which can involve misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor actions, parking, traffic, and non-traffic violations, as well

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as all other actions brought to enforce or recover license penalties or forfeitures declared by such ordinances or other statutes.

Jury Fees.

When a person is convicted of a crime, the court may require payment of certain costs and fees. Such legal financial obligations may include: victim restitution; crime victims' compensation fees; costs associated with the criminal prosecution and sentence; penalties; and assessments.

Only superior courts are specifically authorized to require a convicted defendant to pay jury fees.

**Summary of Bill:**

District courts are specifically granted the same authority as superior courts to require a convicted defendant to pay jury fees. Municipal courts are authorized to impose fees in civil and criminal actions to the same extent as district courts.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on 1/6/2016.

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