

SB 534 -- MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGES

SPONSOR: Bartle (Pratt)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 9 to 1.

This bill modifies the procedures for replacing a municipal judge in the event of an absence, illness, or disqualification. For municipal courts with more than one judge, the presiding judge of the municipal court may request the presiding judge of the circuit court to designate a special municipal judge until the absence ceases or designate a procedure where the municipal court administrator or court clerk may request the presiding judge of the circuit court to designate a special municipal judge.

In the absence of multiple judges or a written procedure, the mayor or chairman of the board of trustees may make a request to the presiding judge of the circuit court. If it is impossible for the mayor or chairman to reach the presiding judge, the mayor or the chairman may designate a special municipal judge until the presiding judge of the circuit court can designate a special municipal judge.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2006, FY 2007, and FY 2008.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that it is currently unclear what happens when a municipal judge is sick or absent. The bill specifies what will happen when a municipal court judge is sick or absent and provides for the appointment of a special municipal court judge.

Testifying for the bill was Senator Bartle.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Amy Woods, Senior Legislative Analyst