

HCS HBs 2968, 2427 & 3086 -- CERTAIN JUDICIAL CIRCUITS

SPONSOR: Parker

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 10 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative by a vote of 10 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HBs 2968, 2427, & 3086.

This bill amends various statutes related to certain judicial circuits by repealing references to the specific counties of which the individual circuits consist. The bill also adds:

- (1) A circuit judge to the 7th judicial circuit beginning fiscal year 2028;
- (2) An associate circuit judge to the 23rd judicial circuit beginning fiscal year 2028. The Governor will appoint the judge and that judge will serve until January 1, 2029. A judge will be elected in 2028 and every four years thereafter;
- (3) Beginning January 1, 2029, a circuit judge and, beginning fiscal year 2028, two associate circuit judges to the 11th judicial circuit. The circuit judge in division 17 will be elected in 2028 for a two-year term and in 2030 for a six-year term and every six years thereafter. The associate circuit judges will be elected in 2028;
- (4) An associate circuit judge to Franklin County in the 20th judicial circuit. The Governor will appoint the judge and that judge will serve until January 1, 2029. A judge will be elected in 2028 and every four years thereafter;
- (5) A circuit judge to the 25th judicial circuit. The judge appointed by the Governor in 2025 will serve until January 1, 2033, and a judge will be elected in 2032 and every six years thereafter; and
- (6) An associate circuit judge to Miller County in the 26th judicial circuit. The Governor will appoint the judge and that judge will serve until January 1, 2029. A judge will be elected in 2028 and every four years thereafter

This bill adds the 7th Judicial Circuit in Clay County to the circuit courts that can appoint a family court commissioner whose compensation does not have to be reimbursed to the State. This does not authorize the circuit to appoint additional family court commissioners on top of the number in office in the circuit as of January 1, 2027.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this is a cleanup bill. This removes the names of the counties and instead goes to numerically-referenced circuits per the circuit realignment plan. A circuit judge was added in the fiscal year 2026 budget for the 25th judicial circuit and this just adds the judgeship that was accounted for in the budget.

Testifying in person for the bill was Representative Parker.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the position in the 25th circuit was created by operation of law and it did have enabling law but it was a general reference. A bill was passed last year that corrects an error. Now the Revisor can reflect certain changes in the footnotes of these Sections. The removal of the county references was to make the remaining statutes in line with the changes that were made in 2013. They removed them because sometimes the counties move circuits, so this was done to eliminate any confusion.

Testifying in person on the bill was Eric D. Jennings, Judicial Conference of Missouri.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.