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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 321 (as introduced 5-12-15)
Sponsor: Senator Mike Green
Committee: Judiciary

Date Completed: 5-22-15

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised Judicature Act to do the following with respect to judgeships in Bay County:

- **Delete a requirement that a circuit court judgeship be eliminated when there is a vacancy in that office or an incumbent judge no longer seeks election or re-election.**
- **Require a reduction of one district court judgeship upon a vacancy in that office, unless the vacancy occurred because the incumbent judge lost an election, or when an incumbent judge no longer sought election or re-election.**

The bill would take effect 90 days after its enactment.

Circuit Court Judgeships

The 18th Judicial Circuit consists of Bay County and has three judges. Beginning on the earlier of the following dates, however, the 18th circuit will have two judges:

- The date on which a vacancy occurs in the office of circuit judge in the 18th circuit.
- The beginning date of the term for which an incumbent circuit judge in the 18th circuit no longer seeks election or re-election to that office.

The bill would delete the provision eliminating a judgeship in the 18th circuit.

District Court Judgeships

The 74th Judicial District consists of Bay County and has three judges. Under the bill, beginning on the earlier of the following dates, the 74th district would have two judges:

- The date on which a vacancy occurred in the office of district judge in the 74th district, unless the vacancy occurred after the vacating judge had been defeated in a primary or general election.
- The beginning date of the term for which an incumbent district judge in the 74th district no longer sought election or re-election to that office as an incumbent.

MCL 600.519 & 600.8139

Legislative Analyst: Patrick Affholter

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would result in the elimination of one district court judgeship, and the retention of one circuit court judgeship, in Bay County, so the State government savings from reducing the circuit court judgeships would be lessened. Each circuit court judgeship has a cost to the State of \$158,792 (of which \$139,920 is salary, \$9,078 is payroll taxes, and \$9,794 is retirement costs). Each district court judgeship has a cost to the State of \$157,003 (of which \$138,270 is salary, \$9,054 is payroll taxes, and \$9,679 is retirement costs). The local court system covers the remaining judgeship costs, including fringe benefits (health care and additional staff), facility costs, and overhead. The costs for local circuit and district courts differ by location.

Fiscal Analyst: John Maxwell

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