

HCS HB 2423 -- PERSONNEL IN CERTAIN JUDICIAL CIRCUITS

SPONSOR: West

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

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2423.

This bill adds one additional Circuit Judge to the 21st Judicial Circuit in St. Louis County in 2024.

The bill modifies the duties and responsibilities for a specified Associate Circuit Judge position in the 11th Judicial Circuit by removing the requirement that the judge necessarily be designated as Division 11 and the requirement that the judge retain the duties and responsibilities of the position with regard to the treatment court.

The bill provides the 11th Judicial Circuit with one additional Associate Circuit Judge position starting in fiscal year 2023, to be elected in 2024. Also beginning in fiscal year 2023, there will be a Commissioner of the Probate Division of the 11th Judicial Circuit.

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

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that, beginning fiscal year 2023, there will be one more Associate Circuit Judge in the 11th Circuit and it adds a Commissioner of the Probate Division in the 11th Circuit. There are 400,000 residents in the county and there has been an increase in crime. There has been stress put on their Court so they need an additional judge. The Court has four openings, and Division 11 is one of them. The Treatment Court in St. Charles is the best Treatment Court in the US, and it is the benchmark for other treatment courts. There would not be enough time for a person elected in November to know how all the Divisions of the Treatment Court work. The Probate Judge is the same as the Treatment Court Judge. There is a 7-14% increase in cases every year. The 11th Circuit is the only circuit that is statutorily required to have a dedicated Treatment Court Division. The population in St. Louis City is less than St. Charles county but they don't even have half the judges they have in St. Louis. St. Charles County is having an influx of cases because people are coming from St. Louis County because that county is not holding trials.

Testifying for the bill were Representative West; Arnie C. AC Dienoff; Robert Cornejo; and Mike Fagras.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

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