2011 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 101

February 1, 2012 – Introduced by Representatives E. Coggs and Young. Referred to Committee on Judiciary and Ethics.

1   ***To amend*** section 6 of article VII and section 7 of article VII of the constitution;

2   **relating to:** judicial circuit subdivision in Milwaukee County (first

3   consideration).

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

The constitution provides that the legislature shall prescribe judicial circuits and bound them by county lines. Currently, the legislature has created 69 judicial circuits, with 66 circuits composed of one county each and three circuits composed of two counties each. In 41 circuits, the legislature has created additional judgeships, and established one branch for each judge. Branches are not geographical divisions. Milwaukee County has 47 such branches. Each judge runs for election from the whole county at–large. This amendment would require the legislature to further divide Milwaukee County into judicial circuit subdivisions having no more than 60,000 population and require that circuit judges be elected from and reside in the subdivision.

A proposed constitutional amendment requires adoption by two successive legislatures, and ratification by the people, before it can become effective.

---

4   ***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That:***

5   SECTION 1. Section 6 of article VII of the constitution is amended to read:

1   [Article VII] Section 6. The legislature shall prescribe by law the number of

2   judicial circuits, making them as compact and convenient as practicable, and

3   bounding them by county lines. No alteration of circuit boundaries or subdivisions

4   shall have the effect of removing a circuit judge from office during the judge's term.

5   In case of an increase of circuits, the first judge or judges shall be elected. In

6   Milwaukee County, circuits shall be divided by law so that no subdivision has a

7   population exceeding 60,000.

8   **SECTION 2.** Section 7 of article VII of the constitution is amended to read:

9   [Article VII] Section 7. For each circuit there shall be chosen by the qualified

10   electors thereof one or more circuit judges as prescribed by law. Circuit judges shall

11   be elected for 6–year terms and shall reside in the circuit from which elected. In

12   Milwaukee County, circuit judges shall reside in the subdivision of the circuit from

13   which elected.

14   ***Be it further resolved, That*** this proposed amendment be referred to the

15   legislature to be chosen at the next general election and that it be published for three

16   months previous to the time of holding such election.

17   **(END)**