



OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR
Fiscal Note

Fiscal Note On: HB 538 HLS 18RS 967
Bill Text Version: REENGROSSED
Opp. Chamb. Action:
Proposed Amd.:
Sub. Bill For.:

Date: May 8, 2018 11:49 AM Author: DWIGHT
Dept./Agy.: Fourteenth Judicial District Analyst: Andree Taylor
Subject: Establishes a magistrate position

COURTS/MAGISTRATES RE INCREASE GF EX See Note Page 1 of 1
Provides for a magistrate judge in the 14th JDC

Purpose of Bill: This bill provides for a magistrate judge for the Fourteenth Judicial District Court (14th JDC) and for the support services and personnel including minute clerks and stenographers, as shall be necessary for the offices of the magistrate judge. The magistrate judge will serve a six-year term, the position will be full-time, and he/she will not be allowed to practice law. The measure also provides that the magistrate judge's annual salary shall be 75% of the salary paid to Judges of the 14th JDC (plus related benefits) and shall be paid from the same sources, and in the same manner, as a judge of the 14th JDC. The support services and personnel, as shall be necessary for the offices of the magistrate judge, shall be paid from the same source as the same positions in the 14th JDC.

Table with 7 columns: EXPENDITURES, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, 5-YEAR TOTAL. Rows include State Gen. Fd., Agy. Self-Gen., Ded./Other, Federal Funds, Local Funds, and Annual Total. Similar structure for REVENUES.

EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION

This measure may increase State General Fund expenditures and decrease Local Fund expenditures starting in January of 2021.

According to officials with the Supreme Court and the 14th JDC, State General Fund expenditures may increase by approximately \$171,000 per year (while local fund expenditures will decrease). For the past several years, an ad-hoc judge has been serving in the capacity of a magistrate judge to help the court with their heavy case workload. The salary and benefits have been paid with local funds. However, this bill provides that the magistrate judge's annual salary shall be paid from the same sources, and in the same manner, as a judge of the 14th Judicial District Court (i.e., State General Fund).

The bill also provides for support staff such as minute clerks and stenographers (to be paid from local funds). According to officials with the 14th JDC, they have been paying the salaries of support staff for the last several years. The only new position that will be created by this bill will be a secretary position for the new magistrate judge. The current salary for a judicial secretary (including benefits) is approximately \$68,000 to be paid with local funds. An official with the 14th JDC informed us that they have plans to pay a lesser amount to this position based on expected workload.

HB 538 provides that the magistrate judge will take office in January of 2021.

REVENUE EXPLANATION

There is no anticipated direct material effect on governmental revenues as a result of this measure.

Senate Dual Referral Rules
[X] 13.5.1 >= \$100,000 Annual Fiscal Cost {S&H}
[] 13.5.2 >= \$500,000 Annual Tax or Fee Change {S&H}

House
[X] 6.8(F)(1) >= \$100,000 SGF Fiscal Cost {H & S}
[] 6.8(G) >= \$500,000 Tax or Fee Increase or a Net Fee Decrease {S}

Signature of Michael G. Battle
Michael G. Battle
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