

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2018 Legislative Session

Bill Version:	HB 298
Fiscal Note Number:	1
(H) Publish Date:	2/9/2018

Identifier: HB298-JUD-ACS-01-22-18

Title: NUMBER OF SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES

Sponsor: RLS BY REQUEST

Requester: House Comm and Regional Affairs

Department: Judiciary

Appropriation: Alaska Court System

Allocation: Trial Courts

OMB Component Number: 768

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

(Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2019 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2019 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates				
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2019	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Personal Services							
Travel							
Services							
Commodities							
Capital Outlay							
Grants & Benefits							
Miscellaneous							
Total Operating	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Fund Source (Operating Only)

None							
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Positions

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Change in Revenues

None							
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2018) cost: 0.0 (separate supplemental appropriation required)

(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2019) cost: 0.0 (separate capital appropriation required)

(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? No

If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed?

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version/comments:

Initial version.

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Agency: Alaska Court System

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Date: 01/22/18

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2018 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Analysis

House Bill 298 increases the total number of superior court judges that are authorized in the state by one, from a total of 42 to 43. It specifies that the additional judge will serve in the First Judicial District (generally, Southeast Alaska). Specifically, the added superior court judge will be assigned to Juneau.

The court system has requested this statutory change to authorize it to reclassify one of the existing district court judge seats to instead be a superior court judgeship. Superior court judges have broader jurisdiction, and having that position upgraded will allow the Juneau caseloads to be handled more efficiently and more effectively. This change will alter the current judicial staffing of Juneau from two superior plus two district judges, to instead be three superior and one district court judge. The superior court judge will use the existing office that the district court judge has used, and will share the two law clerks and the two judicial assistants that currently serve the other two superior court judges in Juneau.

The extra cost of changing this position will be absorbed by the court system. Because the office, existing support staff, and existing supplies will be used without added resources, the increase in cost is limited to the increased salary, plus associated mandatory benefits costs, of a superior court judge over that of the district court judge. That extra amount equals approximately \$35,000. The court is able to cover this amount with savings it has realized from staff attrition in a number of areas. The court system has decreased its number of employees by approximately 9% in the past three years; a portion of the savings in personnel costs from those many positions will cover the additional marginal cost of eliminating a district court judge spot and simultaneously adding the superior court slot.

The court system therefore submits this zero fiscal note.