

**SENATE BILL NO. 237**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE RULES COMMITTEE BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

Introduced: 1/13/06

Referred: Judiciary, Finance

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 **"An Act increasing the number of superior court judges designated for the third judicial**  
2 **district, to provide additional superior court judges at Anchorage, Palmer, and Kenai;**  
3 **and providing for an effective date."**

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 \* **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section  
6 to read:

7 FINDINGS AND INTENT. (a) The legislature finds that

8 (1) the Alaska Court System has experienced a steady multi-year trend in the  
9 growth of the criminal caseload;

10 (2) much of the growth in the criminal caseload has occurred in Anchorage,  
11 Palmer, and Kenai, due to rapid increases in population in these areas; for example, the  
12 Matanuska-Susitna Borough had a 77 percent increase in population from 1990 to 2004 and a  
13 39 percent increase in felony case filings for fiscal year 2004 alone;

14 (3) felony criminal case filings with the court have increased by

1 approximately 20 percent from fiscal year 2002 to fiscal year 2004 and felony criminal cases  
2 are typically the most complex and time-intensive criminal cases that the Alaska Court  
3 System handles; and

4 (4) it is recognized by prosecutors, law enforcement, and others who regularly  
5 appear before the Alaska Court System that additional superior court judges to handle  
6 criminal matters in those areas are essential for an efficient handling of the matters.

7 (b) It is the intent of the legislature that the four additional superior court judges  
8 authorized for the third judicial district by this Act be assigned to criminal matters, and be  
9 assigned as follows:

10 (1) Anchorage, two;

11 (2) Palmer, one;

12 (3) Kenai, one.

13 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 22.10.120 is amended to read:

14 **Sec. 22.10.120. Number of judges.** The superior court consists of **38** [34]  
15 judges, five of whom shall be judges in the first judicial district, three of whom shall  
16 be judges in the second judicial district, **23** [19] of whom shall be judges in the third  
17 judicial district, and seven of whom shall be judges in the fourth judicial district. At  
18 the time of submitting the name of nominees to the governor to fill a vacancy on the  
19 superior court bench, the judicial council shall also designate the district in which the  
20 appointee is to reside and serve.

21 \* **Sec. 3.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2006.