

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2006 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 13
 Bill Version: CSSB 237(FIN)
 (H) Publish Date: 4/27/06

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Law
 Title "An Act increasing the number of superior court RDU Criminal Division
judges designated for the third and fourth judicial districts..." Component Third Judicial District - Outside
 Sponsor Senate Rules by Request of the Governor Anchorage
 Requester House Finance Component No. _____

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Personal Services	166.9	166.9	166.9	166.9	166.9	166.9
Travel	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Contractual	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	14.8
Supplies	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7
Equipment	13.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	198.8	185.8	185.8	185.8	185.8	185.8

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	198.8	185.8	185.8	185.8	185.8	185.8
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	198.8	185.8	185.8	185.8	185.8	185.8

Estimate of any current year (FY2006) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2007 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time	2	2	2	2	2	2
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

The bill increases the number of superior court judges designated for the third and fourth judicial districts by adding two (2) in Anchorage, two (2) in Palmer and one (1) each in Kenai and Fairbanks. The Senate Judiciary Committee amended the Governor's originally proposed legislation to add a judge in Palmer and one in Fairbanks, increasing the number of judges the bill would add from four to six.

Because additional judges do not increase the number of cases handled by each District Attorney's office, under the original bill, the Criminal Division was prepared to absorb any increased demands with existing resources. However, with the addition of two (2) judges in Palmer, we believe that Palmer District Attorney's office will require an additional prosecutor and law office assistant.

Prepared by: Kathryn Daughhete, Director Phone 465-3673
 Division: Administrative Services Division Date/Time 4/4/06 8:38 AM
 Approved by: Kathryn Daughhete for David W. Márquez, Attorney General Date 4/4/2006
 Agency: Department of Law

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BILL NO. CSSB 237(FIN)

ANALYSIS CONTINUATION

The Palmer District Attorney's office is already extremely busy. With the population increases in the Mat-Su Valley over the past several years, the criminal caseload has steadily increased. In calendar year 2002, the Palmer office received 595 felony referrals. In calendar year 2005, that number had increased to 869 felony referrals. Additionally, the cases being referred are more complex. For example, a growing percentage of the drug cases handled by Palmer involve methamphetamine labs. These lab cases are much more resource intensive than previously referred drug cases such as a possession or sale of cocaine case. Death cases are also very resource intensive; in 2005 the Palmer office had 12 homicide cases referred. Therefore, the office is dealing with a higher volume of cases, and the nature of those cases require greater resources.

Palmer has also seen an increase in the level of litigation in cases. Over the past year, the defense bar has been forcing more cases to grand jury and to trial. Thus, although the number of cases in Palmer will not increase due to increasing the number of superior court judges, the pace with which cases are processed will substantially increase. In addition, the bill doubles the number of superior court courtrooms that the office will be required to staff at any given moment. These two factors coupled with the already increasing demands in Palmer require that to make efficient use of the additional judges so that case are processed more quickly, the Palmer office will need additional resources hereby requested.

The amount requested is in accordance with the FY 2007 timekeeping and billing rate for one additional attorney with associated support staff costs. Because Law does not typically add one law office assistant for each attorney, a slight increase to the personal services cost was added to the normal cost of new attorney to allow for full costs of a new law office assistant that will be needed.