

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2019 Legislative Session

Bill Version:	SB 41
Fiscal Note Number:	1
(S) Publish Date:	2/18/2019

Identifier: SB041-JUD-ACS-01-30-19
 Title: NUMBER OF SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES
 Sponsor: RLS BY REQUEST
 Requester: Senate Judiciary

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)

	FY2020	Included in	Out-Year Cost Estimates				
	Appropriation Requested	Governor's FY2020 Request	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2020	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Personal Services	71.0		71.0	71.0	71.0	71.0	71.0
Travel	(9.0)		(9.0)	(9.0)	(9.0)	(9.0)	(9.0)
Services							
Commodities							
Capital Outlay							
Grants & Benefits							
Miscellaneous							
Total Operating	62.0	0.0	62.0	62.0	62.0	62.0	62.0

Fund Source (Operating Only)

1004 Gen Fund (UGF)	62.0		62.0	62.0	62.0	62.0	62.0
Total	62.0	0.0	62.0	62.0	62.0	62.0	62.0

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 (FY2019) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2020) cost: 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*

Does the bill create or modify a new fund or account? No.
(Supplemental/Capital/New Fund - 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 If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed? N/A

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version/comments:

Initial version.

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Division:	Alaska Court System	Date:	01/30/2019 03:00 PM
Approved By:	Nancy Meade for Christine Johnson, Administrative Director	Date:	01/30/19
Agency:	Alaska Court System		

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Analysis

Senate Bill 41 increases the total number of superior court judges that are authorized in the state by two, from a total of 43 to 45. It specifies that the additional judges will serve in the Third Judicial District; specifically, one of the added superior court judges will be assigned to Homer, and one will be assigned to Valdez.

The court system has requested this statutory change to allow it to reclassify two district court judge seats to instead be superior court judge seats. Superior court judges have broader jurisdiction, and upgrading those positions will allow case filings to be handled more efficiently and more effectively. Currently, both Homer and Valdez courts are staffed by only one judge, who is currently a district court judge. In both of those courts, the current judge is leaving the position (one is retiring; one was appointed to a judgeship in Juneau). This bill would allow the court to fill those existing seats with a judge with broader jurisdiction, a superior court judge. That new judge will use the existing offices, furniture, and equipment, which the district court judge has been using. And the two new superior court judges will use existing resources within the Third Judicial District for other needs, such as clerical and administrative assistance.

The additional cost of upgrading these positions is \$71,000 per year in personal services, the amount that two superior court judges cost in salary and benefits as compared to the cost of two district court judges. This increase would be offset by approximately \$9,000 each year, which is the amount the court has spent, on average, over the last three years in travel expenses for other superior court judges to cover the superior court proceedings that take place in Homer and Valdez. That travel expense would be avoided with the reclassification of the positions.

The Alaska Court System therefore submits this fiscal note for \$62,000 per year to account for the net increase in cost for the two superior court judgeships added by SB 41.