

Legislative Analysis



DISTRICT COURT JUDGE COMPENSATION

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 5442 (proposed substitute H-1)

Sponsor: Rep. Brian K. Elder

Committee: Judiciary

Revised 3-12-20

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 5442 would amend the Revised Judicature Act to increase the compensation of district court judges. Currently, district court judges are paid a salary that is equal to 84% of the salary of a justice of the Supreme Court as of December 31, 2015. Probate and circuit court judges are paid a salary that is equal to 85% of the salary of a Supreme Court justice as of that date. Salaries of district, probate, and circuit court judges are also adjusted based on any wage increases approved by the Civil Service Commission for nonexclusively represented employees (state workers not eligible for union representation). Currently, the salary of a probate or circuit court judge is \$151,438, and the salary of a district court judge is \$149,655.

The bill would increase the salary of a district court judge to 85% of the salary of a Supreme Court justice beginning October 1, 2020. The bill would also provide for payment of the difference in the amounts paid to district court judges and probate court judges that was due to increases for nonexclusively represented employees between January 1, 2016, and September 30, 2020.

The bill would take effect 90 days after its enactment.

MCL 600.8202

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 5442 would have a fiscal impact on the state, but not on local units of government. District judges' salaries are paid by the state in two stages. The first is the largest portion, or state portion, in which a warrant is provided by the state directly to the judge. The remaining portion of the salary is paid by the court funding unit, which is then reimbursed for the entire amount by the state. Currently, there are 235 district court judges in the state. Increasing the salary of a district court judge according to provisions of the bill would cost the state an additional \$418,908.65. In addition, costs for retirement and FICA would increase slightly, roughly \$35,000, based on the higher salary level.

Legislative Analyst: Rick Yuille
Fiscal Analyst: Robin Risko

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