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BILL ANALYSIS

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House Bill 5479 (as reported with amendment)
Sponsor: Representative Jim Howell
House Committee: Judiciary
Senate Committee: Appropriations

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised Judicature Act (RJA) to authorize a new judgeship in the 77th Judicial District, which consists of Mecosta and Osceola Counties and currently has one judge. Under the bill, subject to Section 8175 of the RJA, this district could have one additional judge effective January 1, 2005.

If the new judgeship were approved, the election for the judgeship would have to take place in Osceola County.

(Under Section 8175, an additional district judgeship permitted by the RJA may not be authorized to be filled by election unless the governing body of each district control unit in the district adopts a resolution approving the creation of that judgeship. The clerk of each district control unit must file a copy of the resolution with the State Court Administrator by 4:00 p.m. of the 16th Tuesday preceding the August primary for the election to fill the additional judgeship.)

MCL 600.8142

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would increase costs to State and local government.

Based on the 2004 salary of a district court judge, the State would incur the following annual costs for a new district judgeship:

Salary	\$138,272
Social Security/Medicare	7,505
Defined Contribution Retirement	9,679
Total	\$155,456

The State also would be responsible for a one-time cost of approximately \$6,000 for recording equipment for a new district judge. The cost of the proposed additional judgeship was not included in the Executive Recommendation for the FY 2004-05 budget. If a judge were added as of January 1, 2005, it would cost the State approximately \$122,600 for FY 2004-05.

Local costs would depend on the cost of fringe benefits for judges provided by the local units, support staff costs, and whether additional office or courtroom facilities would be necessary.

Date Completed: 3-1-04

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