

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 11
By: Duncan
Judiciary
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

This bill is designed to provide support to the Texas judiciary through greater financial compensation for justices and the collection of data to study pay.

Court fees are assessed under this legislation to fund such pay increases.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

The bill increases the annual salary of a district judge to at least \$125,000. The annual salary for a justice of a court of appeals, other than the chief justice, is set at equal to 110% the salary of a district judge. Justices of the supreme court and of the court of criminal appeals, other than their respective presiding justices, shall be entitled to a salary that is equal to 120 % the salary of a district judge. The bill provides that county judges are entitled to an annual supplement of \$15,000 if at least 40 % of their functions are judicial. Other supplemental salaries and caps, including those relating to extrajudicial services and serving on a juvenile board are set forth in the bill.

The bill requires the Office of Court Administration to collect and report data on judicial turnover and comparative information regarding the compensation of judges in other large states and lawyers in private practice. The state bar is required to collect and report data on the compensation of lawyers in private practice.

The bill raises the multiplier for the standard service retirement annuity for the elected class of retirees from 2.0 to 2.3 %, and contains certain instructions for the Employees Retirement System of Texas.

The bill modifies current law to include certain fees that are to be deposited for the support of the judiciary, including the addition of a \$7 fee to be imposed on the conviction of certain offenses, and provides for the fee to be allocated between the municipal or county authority and the judicial fund, including \$3 to the fair defense account.

The bill provides for a \$37 filing fee to be assessed to any civil suit filed in district court, statutory county court or county court for support of the judiciary.

EFFECTIVE DATE

November 1, 2005

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The committee substitute clarifies language relating to certain contributions made to the Employees Retirement System of Texas. The substitute also reduces the \$7 conviction fee to \$4, removing the contribution to the fair defense account. Additionally, an appropriation is added to ensure funding, and removes the state bar report on attorney pay.