

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1519
By: Wentworth
Judiciary
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Compensation for extended service on the bench encourages experienced judges to remain on the bench and enhances the quality of justice in the state.

The bill entitles a judge or justice who is paid by the state, is a member of a Judicial Retirement System, and who is an active judge to longevity pay. The longevity pay includes \$20 for each year of service credited in the retirement system, and is calculated and becomes payable beginning with the month following the month in which the judge or justice completes 16 years of service for which credit is established in the retirement system.

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

SECTION 1. Amends Section 659.042, Government Code, as follows:

Sec. 659.042. EXCLUSIONS. Provides that an individual who holds a statewide office that is normally filled by vote of the people is not entitled to longevity pay, except as provided by Section 659.0445.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 659.044(a), Government Code, to include Section 659.0445 as an exception to this subsection.

SECTION 3. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 659, Government Code, by adding Section 659.0445, as follows:

Sec. 659.0445. LONGEVITY PAY FOR STATE JUDGES AND JUSTICES. (a) Entitles a judge or justice who receives a salary paid by the state, is a member of the Judicial Retirement System of Texas Plan One or Two, and is an active judge, as defined by Section 74.041(a), to longevity pay as provided by this section.

(b) Provides that the monthly amount of longevity pay to which a judge or justice described by Subsection (a) is entitled is \$20 for each year of service credited in the applicable retirement system, subject to Subsection (c), and is calculated and becomes payable beginning with the month following the month in which the judge or justice completes 16 years of service for which credit is established in the applicable retirement system.

(c) Prohibits a judge or justice from receiving longevity pay for more than 16 years of service credited in the applicable retirement system.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 814.103(a), Government Code, to exclude longevity pay payable under Section 659.0445 from being considered as state salary and used in calculating the standard service annuity for service credited in the elected class of membership.

SECTION 5. Amends Section 831.001, Government Code, by adding Subdivision (6-a), to define "state salary."

SECTION 6. Amends Section 836.001, Government Code, by adding Subdivision (9-a), to define "state salary."

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2007.