

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3249  
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Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Before a new district court is established, the Office of Court Administration (OCA) usually conducts a workload analysis of the courts already operating in the relevant county to determine whether the judicial need exceeds the current judicial full-time equivalent (FTE) capacity. That analysis is based on a weighted caseload study. The workload analysis is conducted by request, meaning that awareness of growing judicial workload problems can be lacking, and the judicial needs of a jurisdiction can be left growing unchecked for many years. H.B. 3249 seeks to address this issue by requiring OCA to regularly conduct a district court workload analysis for the most populous counties in the state and to report the results to the executive and legislative branches.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **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**

H.B. 3249 amends the Government Code to require the Office of Court Administration (OCA) to biennially conduct a district court workload analysis by collecting information on the 30 most populous counties in the state relating to the following:

- the number of estimated full-time equivalent judicial officers working in the county in the preceding fiscal year;
- the number of full-time equivalent judicial officers needed in the county based on the most recent weighted caseload study;
- the number of new case filings in each of the preceding five fiscal years;
- the clearance rate of cases in each of the preceding five fiscal years;
- the calendar year in which the last district court was created by statute; and
- any other information identified by the administrative director of OCA.

The bill requires OCA to report the information collected to the governor, lieutenant governor, and the members of the legislature not later than October 1 of every even-numbered year.

H.B. 3249 defines "judicial officer" as a district judge, associate judge, master, magistrate, or referee and "clearance rate" by reference as the number of cases disposed of by the district courts divided by the number of cases added to the dockets of the district courts.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2023.