



SF 2265 – Jury System Update (LSB5232SV)
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Fiscal Note Version – New

Description

Senate File 2265 relates to the juror selection process, eliminates the use of jury commissions to draw juror lists, and requires the master jury list to be updated annually using an electronic data processing system. The bill provides that jury managers and the State Court Administrator are responsible for implementing the provisions of the bill.

Background

The Governor's Working Group on Criminal Justice Policy Reform was established in August 2015 to research and make policy recommendations related to reforms in Iowa criminal justice practices. In November 2015, the Working Group submitted several strategy proposals. These proposals included recommendations related to increasing the diversity of jury pools. Those recommendations are listed below:

- Adopt new jury management software that will be more likely to generate jury pools that reflect a fair cross section of the community.
- Study the use of additional source lists to create jury pools to ensure greater diversity.
- Collect and maintain statistics regarding the racial composition of jury pools.
- Update jury pool lists annually.
- Study ways to improve response rates to jury summonses and evaluate juror terms of service.
- Restore oversight and accountability to the jury selection process.

Jury Commissions/Manager: Under current law, counties may use jury commissions or a jury manager to draw up a master jury list of eligible jurors, return a list of grand jurors and petit jurors to the clerk of district court, and select the number of required jurors from the grand juror or petit juror list. The bill eliminates jury commissions. As a result, counties will be required to use jury managers to draw master jury lists and select jurors. The bill also requires an electronic data processing system to be used to create a master jury list and for the random drawing of jurors.

Master Jury List: Under current law, the master jury list must be updated once every two years. The master jury list includes names taken from all source lists, including the voter registration list and the motor vehicle operators list, for possible jury service. The bill requires the master jury list to be updated every year and include the nonoperators identification list as a source list.

Assumptions

The cost expended by the Judicial Branch to maintain and operate the existing automated jury management system will remain the same.

Fiscal Impact

[SF 2265](#) will have a minimal fiscal impact on the Judicial Branch and the State General Fund. The bill could impose some additional work time for local jury managers to supplement the source list with state nondriver photo identification, but it is unlikely to be substantial. In addition, the Judicial Branch has the ability to meet the demands of [SF 2265](#) with the existing automatic jury management system.

It should be noted that the existing automatic jury management system is 18 years old, and the Judicial Branch is planning on purchasing a new system. Upgrading the application will substantially improve the utility and flexibility of the jury list management system. The Judicial Branch currently spends \$117,000 per year to maintain and operate the existing automated jury management system. The Judicial Branch has included an additional \$400,000 in its FY 2017 budget request to the Governor and the General Assembly to cover the cost of upgrading to a new automated jury list and juror management system. The \$400,000 is in addition to the funds currently spent to maintain the system.

Source

Iowa Judicial Branch

/s/ Holly M. Lyons

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The fiscal note for this bill was prepared pursuant to [Joint Rule 17](#) and the Iowa Code. Data used in developing this fiscal note is available from the Fiscal Services Division of the Legislative Services Agency upon request.
