Senate Study Bill 1137

SENATE FILE ______
BY (PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY BILL BY CHAIRPERSON REDFERN)

Passed	Senate,	Date	Passed	House,	Date	
Vote:	Ayes	Nays	Vote:	Ayes	Nays	
Approved						

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A BILL FOR
  1 An Act relating to the judicial branch by changing procedures for
        appointing or nominating a judge, magistrate, or chief
        juvenile court officer, by authorizing the voluntary transfer of a district judge, by prohibiting members of a judicial
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        nominating commission from voting on certain nominees, by
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        apportioning judgeships among the judicial election districts,
        and by expanding the jurisdiction of a magistrate.
  8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:
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            Section 1. Section 46.12, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code
      2 2003, is amended to read as follows:
            When a vacancy occurs or will occur within one hundred
      4 twenty days in the supreme court, the court of appeals, or
      5 district court, the state commissioner of elections shall
      6 forthwith so notify the chairperson of the proper judicial
     7 nominating commission, unless the chief justice has ordered 8 the state commissioner of elections to delay sending the 9 notification. The chief justice may order the delay for up
    10 one hundred eighty days for budgetary reasons. The
    11 chairperson shall call a meeting of the commission within ten
  1 12 days after such notice; if the chairperson fails to do so, the 1 13 chief justice shall call such meeting.
            Sec. 2. Section 46.14, Code 2003, is amended to read as
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  1 15 follows:
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            46.14 NOMINATION.
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            1. Each judicial nominating commission shall carefully
  1 18 consider the individuals available for judge, and within sixty
  1 19 days after receiving notice of a vacancy shall certify to the
  1 20 governor and the chief justice the proper number of nominees,
    21 in alphabetical order. Such nominees shall be chosen by the
  1 22 affirmative vote of a majority of the full statutory number of 1 23 commissioners upon the basis of their qualifications and
  1 24 without regard to political affiliation. Nominees shall be
    25 members of the bar of Iowa, shall be residents of the state or 26 district of the court to which they are nominated, and shall
    27 be of such age that they will be able to serve an initial and
    28 one regular term of office to which they are nominated before 29 reaching the age of seventy=two years. Nominees for district
  1 30 judge shall file a certified application form, to be provided
  1 31 by the supreme court, with the chairperson of the district
    32 judicial nominating commission. No person shall be eligible 33 for nomination by a commission as judge during the term for
    34 which the person was elected or appointed to that commission.
  1 35 Absence of a commissioner or vacancy upon the commission shall
      1 not invalidate a nomination. The chairperson of the
      2 commission shall promptly certify the names of the nominees,
      3 in alphabetical order, to the governor and the chief justice.
            2. A commissioner shall not be eligible for nomination by
        the commission during the term for which the commissioner was
      6 elected or appointed to that commission. A commissioner shall
      7 not be eligible to vote for the nomination of a family member, 8 current or former law partner, or current or former business
      9 partner. For purposes of this subsection, "family member"
     10 means a spouse, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt,
    11 first cousin, nephew, niece, father=in=law, mother=in=law, 12 son=in=law, daughter=in=law, brother=in=law, sister=in=law,
    13 father, mother, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter,
     14 stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, or half sister.
15 Sec. 3. Section 602.1217, subsection 1, Code 2003, is
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2 16 amended to read as follows: 2 17 1. The district judges within a judicial district, by

2 18 majority vote, <u>chief judge of the judicial district</u> shall 2 19 appoint a chief juvenile court officer and may remove the 2 20 officer for cause. 2 21 Sec. 4. Section Section 602.1501, subsection 4, Code 2003, is Sec. 4. 2 22 amended to read as follows: 2 23 4. District associate judges shall receive the salary set 2 24 by the general assembly. However, an alternate district 25 associate judge whose appointment is authorized under section 26 602.6303 shall receive a salary for each day of actual duty 2 27 equal to a district associate judge's daily salary.
2 28 Sec. 5. Section 602.1604, Code 2003, is amended to read as 2 29 follows: 2 30 JUDGES SHALL NOT PRACTICE LAW. 602.1604 While holding office, a supreme court justice, court of 32 appeals judge, district judge, or district associate judge 33 shall not practice as an attorney or counselor or give advice 34 in relation to any action pending or about to be brought in 2 35 any of the courts of the state. A person whose appointment 3 1 an alternate district associate judge is authorized under 2 section 602.6303 may practice law except when actually serving 3 as a district associate judge.
4 Sec. 6. Section 602.1611, subsection 2, Code 2003, is 5 amended by striking the subsection. 6 Sec. 7. Section 602.6201, subsections 5 and 6, Code 2003, 7 are amended to read as follows: 5. In those judicial election districts having more 9 district judges than the number of judgeships specified by the 10 formula in subsection 3, vacancies shall not be filled If a 11 vacancy in a judgeship occurs, the judgeship shall be 12 apportioned to the judicial election district having the 13 greatest numerical disparity between authorized judgeships and 14 judgeships specified by the formula in subsection 3, as 3 15 calculated by the state court administrator. If two or more 16 judicial election districts have an equal numerical disparity 17 between authorized judgeships and judgeships specified by the 18 formula, the judgeship shall be apportioned to the judicial 19 election district with greatest percentage of need in terms of 20 authorized judgeships filled and judgeships specified by the formula as calculated by the state court administrator. 3 22 6. In those judicial election districts having fewer or 23 the same number of district judges as the number of judgeships 24 specified by the formula in subsection 3, vacancies in the 25 number of district judges shall be filled as they occur. 3 26 Notwithstanding any other provision of the Code to the 27 contrary, if the chief justice of the supreme court determines 28 an inequity exists in the allocation of judgeships and 29 judicial workload between judicial election districts, the 30 chief justice may authorize a voluntary permanent transfer of 31 a district judge from one judicial election district to 32 another. The chief justice shall notify all eligible district 33 judges of the intent to authorize a voluntary permanent
34 transfer and the terms of such a transfer. The chief justice 3 35 may transfer a district judge who consents to the transfer 1 within six months of the notification. The transfer of a 2 district judge shall take effect within sixty days of the 3 official announcement of the transfer by the chief justice <u>4 district judge transferred pursuant to this subsection shall</u> 5 have six months from the date of the announcement of the 6 transfer to establish residency in the judicial election 7 district where the district judge is transferred. A district 8 judge who has been transferred shall stand for retention in 9 the judicial election district to which the district judge has 10 been transferred as provided in chapter 46. For purposes of 11 subsection 3, the judgeship shall be apportioned to the 12 judicial election district where the judge is transferred. 13 voluntary transfer pursuant to this subsection shall not cause 4 14 a vacancy of a judgeship in the judicial election district from which the district judge was transferred.

Sec. 8. Section 602.6201, subsection 7, Code 2003, is 4 17 amended by striking the subsection. Sec. 9. Section 602.6201, subsection 8, Code 2003, is 4 18 4 19 amended to read as follows: 8. Vacancies shall not be filled in a judicial election 4 2.0 4 21 district which becomes entitled to fewer judgeships under 4 22 subsection 3, but an An incumbent district judge shall not be 4 23 removed from office because of a reduction in the number of 4 24 authorized judgeships. Sec. 10. Section 602.6301, Code 2003, is amended to read 4 25 4 26 as follows: 4 2.7 602.6301 NUMBER AND APPORTIONMENT OF DISTRICT ASSOCIATE 4 28 JUDGES.

There shall be one district associate judge in counties 4 30 having a population of more than thirty=five thousand and less 4 31 than eighty thousand; two in counties having a population of 32 eighty thousand or more and less than one hundred twenty=five 33 thousand; three in counties having a population of one hundred 34 twenty=five thousand or more and less than two hundred 35 thousand; four in counties having a population of two hundred thousand or more and less than two hundred thirty=five thousand; five in counties having a population of two hundred 5 thirty=five thousand or more and less than two hundred seventy 5 thousand; six in counties having a population of two hundred 5 seventy thousand or more and less than three hundred five 5 6 thousand; and seven in counties having a population of three hundred five thousand or more. However, a county shall not 8 lose a district associate judgeship solely because of a 9 reduction in the county's population. If the formula provided 10 in this section results in the allocation of an additional $5\ 11\ district$ associate judgeship to a county, implementation of $5\ 12\ the$ allocation shall be subject to prior approval of the 13 supreme court and availability of funds to the judicial 14 branch. A district associate judge appointed pursuant to 5 15 section 602.6302 or 602.6303 shall not be counted for purposes 5 16 of this section. 5 17 Sec. 11. Section 602.6304, subsections 1, 2, and 3, Code 5 18 2003, are amended to read as follows:

The district associate judges authorized by sections 5 20 602.63017 and 602.6302, and 602.6303 shall be appointed by the 5 21 district judges of the judicial election district from persons 5 22 nominated by the county magistrate appointing commission. In 5 23 the case of a district associate judge to be appointed to more 24 than one county, the appointment shall be from persons 25 nominated by the county magistrate appointing commissions 26 acting jointly and in the case of a district associate judge 27 to be appointed to more than one judicial election district of 28 the same judicial district, the appointment shall be by a 5 29 majority of the district judges in each judicial election 30 district.

In November of any year in which an impending vacancy 2. 32 is created because a district associate judge is not retained 33 in office pursuant to a judicial election, the county 34 magistrate appointing commission shall publicize notice of the 35 vacancy in at least two publications in the official county The commission shall accept applications for 1 newspaper. 2 consideration for nomination as district associate judge for a 3 minimum of fifteen days prior to certifying nominations. 4 commission shall consider the applications and shall, by 5 majority vote, certify to the chief judge of the judicial 6 district not later than December 15 of that year the names of three applicants who are nominated by the commission for the 8 vacancy, unless the chief justice has ordered the commission 9 to delay the certification of the nominees to the chief judge.
10 The chief justice may order the delay of the certification for up to one hundred eighty days for budgetary reasons. If there 6 12 are three or fewer applicants the commission shall certify all 6 13 applicants who meet the statutory qualifications. Nominees 6 14 shall be chosen solely on the basis of the qualifications of 6 15 the applicants, and political affiliation shall not be

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6 16 considered. 6 17 3. Within thirty days after a county magistrate appointing 6 18 commission receives notification of an actual or impending 6 19 vacancy in the office of district associate judge, other than 6 20 a vacancy referred to in subsection 2, the commission shall 6 21 certify to the chief judge of the judicial district the names 6 22 of three applicants who are nominated by the commission for 23 the vacancy, unless the chief justice has ordered the 24 commission to delay the certification of the nominees to the 25 chief judge. The chief justice may order the delay of the 26 certification for up to one hundred eighty days for budgetary 27 reasons. The commission shall publication to the commission shall publicate the commission shall problem to the <u>6 25 chief judge</u>. reasons. The commission shall publicize notice of the vacancy 6 28 in at least two publications in the official county newspaper. 6 29 The commission shall accept applications for consideration for 6 30 nomination as district associate judge for a minimum of 6 31 fifteen days prior to certifying nominations. The commission 32 shall consider the applications and shall, by majority vote, 33 certify to the chief judge of the judicial district the names 34 of three applicants who are nominated by the commission for 35 the vacancy. If there are three or fewer applicants the 1 commission shall certify all applicants who meet the statutory qualifications. Nominees shall be chosen solely on the basis 3 of the qualifications of the applicants, and political 4 affiliation shall not be considered. As used in this

5 subsection, a vacancy is created by the death, retirement, 6 resignation, or removal of a district associate judge, or by an increase in the number of positions authorized. Sec. 12. Section 602.64 amended to read as follows: Section 602.6403, subsection 3, Code 2003, is 7 10 3. Within thirty days following receipt of notification of 11 a vacancy in the office of magistrate, the commission shall 12 appoint a person to the office to serve the remainder of the 7 13 unexpired term, unless the chief justice has ordered the 14 commission to delay the appointment for up to one hundred 7 15 eighty days for budgetary reasons. For purposes of this 7 16 section, vacancy means a death, resignation, retirement, or 7 17 removal of a magistrate, or an increase in the number of 7 18 positions authorized. Sec. 13. Section 602.6405, subsection 1, Code 2003, is 7 20 amended to read as follows: Magistrates have jurisdiction of simple misdemeanors, 2.1 1. 7 22 including traffic and ordinance violations, and preliminary 7 23 hearings, search warrant proceedings, county and municipal 24 infractions, and small claims. Magistrates have jurisdiction 25 to determine the disposition of livestock or another animal, 7 26 as provided in sections 717.5 and 717B.4, if the magistrate 27 determines the value of the livestock or animal is less than 28 ten thousand dollars. Magistrates have jurisdiction to 29 exercise the powers specified in sections 556F.2 and 556F.12, 30 and to hear complaints or preliminary informations, issue 31 warrants, order arrests, make commitments, and take bail. 32 Magistrates have jurisdiction over violations of section 7 33 123.49, subsection 2, paragraph "h". Magistrates who are 34 admitted to the practice of law in this state have 7 35 jurisdiction over all proceedings for the involuntary 1 commitment, treatment, or hospitalization of individuals under 2 chapters 125 and 229, except as otherwise provided under 8 3 section 229.6A; nonlawyer magistrates have jurisdiction and 8 8 4 over emergency detention and hospitalization proceedings under 5 sections 125.91 and 229.22 proceedings under chapter 236. 8 6 Magistrates have jurisdiction to conduct hearings authorized 8 8 under section 809.4. Sec. 14. Section 602.7103B, subsections 2 and 3, Code 8 8 9 2003, are amended to read as follows: 8 10 2. In November of any year in which an impending vacancy 8 11 is created because a full-time associate juvenile judge is not 8 12 retained in office pursuant to a judicial election, the county 8 13 magistrate appointing commission shall publicize notice of the 8 14 vacancy in at least two publications in the official county The commission shall accept applications for 8 15 newspaper. 8 16 consideration for nomination as full=time associate juvenile 17 judge for a minimum of fifteen days prior to certifying 8 18 nominations. The commission shall consider the applications 8 19 and shall, by majority vote, certify to the chief judge of the 8 20 judicial district not later than December 15 of that year the 8 21 names of three applicants who are nominated by the commission 22 for the vacancy, unless the chief justice has ordered the
23 commission to delay the certification of the nominees to the
24 chief judge. The chief justice may order the delay of the
25 certification for up to one hundred eighty days for budgetary 8 26 reasons. If there are three or fewer applicants, the 8 27 commission shall certify all applicants who meet the statutory 8 28 qualifications. Nominees shall be chosen solely on the basis 8 29 of the qualifications of the applicants, and political 8 30 affiliation shall not be considered. 8 31 3. Within thirty days after a county magistrate appointing 8 32 commission receives notification of an actual or impending 8 33 vacancy in the office of full=time associate juvenile judge, 8 34 other than a vacancy referred to in subsection 2, the 35 commission shall certify to the chief judge of the judicial 8 1 district the names of three applicants who are nominated by 9 2 the commission for the vacancy, unless the chief justice has 3 ordered the commission to delay the certification of the 4 nominees to the chief judge. The chief justice may order the 5 delay of the certification for up to one hundred eighty days for budgetary reasons. The commission shall publicize notice of the vacancy in at least two publications in the official 8 county newspaper. The commission shall accept applications 9 for consideration for nomination as full=time associate 9 10 juvenile judge for a minimum of fifteen days prior to 11 certifying nominations. The commission shall consider the 12 applications and shall, by majority vote, certify to the chief 13 judge of the judicial district the names of three applicants 14 who are nominated by the commission for the vacancy. If there 9 15 are three or fewer applicants, the commission shall certify

9 16 all applicants who meet the statutory qualifications. 9 17 Nominees shall be chosen solely on the basis of the 9 18 qualifications of the applicants, and political affiliation 9 19 shall not be considered. As used in this subsection, a 9 20 vacancy is created by the death, retirement, resignation, or 9 21 removal of a full=time associate juvenile judge, or by an 22 increase in the number of positions authorized.
23 Sec. 15. Section 633.20B, subsections 2 and 3, Code 2003, 24 is amended to read as follows: 9 25 25 2. In November of any year in which an impending vacancy 26 is created because a full=time associate probate judge is not 27 retained in office pursuant to a judicial election, the county 9 28 magistrate appointing commission shall publicize notice of the 29 vacancy in at least two publications in the official county 30 newspaper. The commission shall accept applications for 30 newspaper. 9 31 consideration for nomination as full=time associate probate 32 judge for a minimum of fifteen days prior to certifying 33 nominations. The commission shall consider the applications 9 34 and shall, by majority vote, certify to the chief judge of the 9 35 judicial district not later than December 15 of that year the names of three applicants who are nominated by the commission 10 10 2 for the vacancy, unless the chief justice has ordered the 10 10 10 10 3 commission to delay the certification of the nominees to the 4 chief judge. The chief justice may order the delay of the 5 certification for up to one hundred eighty days for budgetary 6 reasons. If there are three or fewer applicants, the commission shall certify all applicants who meet the statutory 10 8 qualifications. Nominees shall be chosen solely on the basis 10 9 of the qualifications of the applicants, and political 10 10 affiliation shall not be considered. 10 11 3. Within thirty days after a county magistrate appointing 10 12 commission receives notification of an actual or impending 10 13 vacancy in the office of full=time associate probate judge, 10 14 other than a vacancy referred to in subsection 2, the 10 15 commission shall certify to the chief judge of the judicial 10 16 district the names of three applicants who are nominated by 10 17 the commission for the vacancy, unless the chief justice has 10 18 ordered the commission to delay the certification of the 10 19 nominees to the chief judge. The chief justice may order 10 20 delay of the certification for up to one hundred eighty days 10 21 for budgetary reasons. The commission shall publicize noti 10 22 of the vacancy in at least two publications in the official The commission shall publicize notice 10 23 county newspaper. The commission shall accept applications 10 24 for consideration for nomination as full=time associate 10 25 probate judge for a minimum of fifteen days prior to 10 26 certifying nominations. The commission shall consider the 10 27 applications and shall, by majority vote, certify to the chief 10 28 judge of the judicial district the names of three applicants 10 29 who are nominated by the commission for the vacancy. 10 30 are three or fewer applicants, the commission shall certify 10 31 all applicants who meet the statutory qualifications. 10 32 Nominees shall be chosen solely on the basis of the 10 33 qualifications of the applicants, and political affiliation 10 34 shall not be considered. As used in this subsection, a 10 35 vacancy is created by the death, retirement, resignation, removal of a full=time associate probate judge, or by an 11 11 increase in the number of positions authorized. 11 Sec. 16. Section 602.6303, Code 2003, is repealed. EXPLANATION 11 11 This bill relates to procedures for appointing judgeships 11 6 11 11

and magistrates, to the voluntary transfer of judgeships, to the apportionment of judgeships among judicial election districts, to the appointment of a juvenile court officer, and to the jurisdiction of a magistrate.

11 10 DELAY OF APPOINTMENT. The bill permits the chief justice 11 11 of the supreme court to delay, by up to 180 days, the 11 12 nomination process of a judge for appointment to the Iowa 11 13 supreme court, court of appeals, or district court for 11 14 budgetary reasons. Current law requires that nominees to the 11 15 supreme court, court of appeals, or district court be 11 16 certified to the governor for appointment within 60 days of 11 17 the nominating commission receiving notice of a vacancy. 11 18 bill also permits the chief justice of the supreme court for 11 19 budgetary reasons to delay, by up to 180 days, the appointment 11 20 process to fill a vacancy for a district associate judge, 11 21 magistrate, full=time associate juvenile judge, or probate

11 22 judge. 11 23 NOMINATING COMMISSION. The bill also prohibits a member of 11 24 a judicial nominating commission from nominating a family 11 25 member, current or former law partner, or business partner,

11 26 for a judgeship.

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11 27 CHIEF JUVENILE COURT OFFICER APPOINTMENT. The bill changes 11 28 the method in which a chief juvenile court officer is The bill permits the chief judge to appoint the 11 29 appointed. 11 30 chief juvenile court officer and to remove the officer for 11 31 cause. The chief juvenile officer under current law is 11 32 appointed by a majority vote of all the district court judges 11 33 in the judicial district.

ALTERNATE DISTRICT ASSOCIATE JUDGE. The bill eliminates 11 35 the position of alternate district associate judge. Current law provides that if a county has only one district associate judge, an alternate district associate judge may be appointed. 3 An alternate district associate judge under current law may 4 practice law except when actually serving as an alternate

district associate judge.

APPORTIONMENT OF DISTRICT JUDGES. The bill requires a 7 newly vacant judgeship to be apportioned to the judicial 8 election district having the greatest numerical disparity 9 between authorized judgeships and judgeships specified by the 12 10 formula in Code section 602.6201, subsection 3. The bill 12 11 provides that if two or more judicial election districts have 12 12 an equal numerical disparity between authorized judgeships and 12 13 judgeships specified by the formula, the judgeship shall be 12 14 apportioned to the judicial election district with the 12 15 greatest percentage of need in terms of authorized judgeships 12 16 filled and judgeships specified by the formula as calculated 12 17 by the state court administrator.

VOLUNTARY TRANSFER OF DISTRICT JUDGES. The bill provides 12 19 that if the chief justice of the supreme court determines an 12 20 inequity exists in the allocation of judgeships and judicial 12 21 workload between judicial election districts, the chief 12 22 justice may authorize a voluntary permanent transfer of a 12 23 district judge from one judicial election district to another. 12 24 The chief justice shall notify all eligible district judges of 12 25 the intent to authorize a voluntary transfer. The chief 12 26 justice may permanently transfer a district judge who consents 12 27 to the transfer within six months of the notification to 12 28 authorize such a transfer. The bill provides that the 12 29 transfer of a district judge shall take effect within 60 days 12 30 of the official announcement of the transfer. Under the bill 12 31 a district judge who transfers shall establish a residency in 12 32 the new judicial election district within six months of the 12 33 official announcement of the transfer. A district judge who 12 34 is transferred shall stand for retention in the new judicial 12 35 election district.

MAGISTRATE JURISDICTION. The bill expands the jurisdiction 2 of magistrates, including magistrates who have not been 3 admitted to the practice of law in the state. The bill 4 permits a magistrate who has not been admitted to the practice 5 of law to have jurisdiction in all mental health or substance 6 abuse commitment or treatment proceedings in Code chapter 125 7 or 229 except for juveniles. The bill also provides that all 8 magistrates have jurisdiction over emergency proceedings in 9 domestic abuse cases under Code chapter 236. A magistrate 13 10 does not have jurisdiction in domestic abuse=related cases in 13 11 Code chapter 236 under current law.

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