

House Study Bill 631 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY BILL BY CHAIRPERSON
HOLT)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the collection and publication of judicial
2 officer performance information.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. **602.1219 Judicial officer**
2 **performance information.**

3 1. Each year, the state court administrator shall collect
4 and publish information related to each district court judge
5 including district associate judges, full-time associate juvenile
6 judges, and full-time associate probate judges. The information
7 must include but is not limited to all of the following:

8 a. *Pretrial discretion.*

9 (1) The percentage of cases in which the judge set a bond
10 amount lower than the bond schedule promulgated pursuant to
11 section 804.21, subsection 5.

12 (2) The frequency with which a person is released on the
13 person's own recognizance by the judge when the person is
14 arrested for a violent offense compared to a nonviolent offense.

15 b. *Sentencing outcomes.*

16 (1) The frequency with which the judge's final sentence
17 is lower than the statutory recommendation or the prosecutor's
18 recommendation.

19 (2) The number of times the judge grants a deferred judgment,
20 deferred sentence, or suspended sentence.

21 c. *Appellate review.* The number of times the judge's rulings
22 are reversed by the court of appeals or the supreme court due to
23 abuse of discretion or error of law.

24 d. *Courtroom efficiency.*

25 (1) The average time from the filing of a motion or
26 submission of a case for ruling to the judge's final ruling on
27 the motion or case.

28 (2) The number of cases the judge has disposed of compared to
29 the number of outstanding cases remain on the judge's docket.

30 2. The judicial branch shall create and maintain an internet
31 site that includes all of the following features:

32 a. A search-by-county and search-by-name interface.

33 b. Each judge's performance information required under
34 subsection 1 along with the average performance statistics for
35 each judicial district.

1 c. A space where each judge may provide a personal statement
2 of no more than five hundred words explaining the judge's
3 judicial philosophy or addressing specific data trends.

4 EXPLANATION

5 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
6 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

7 This bill relates to the collection and publication of
8 judicial officer performance information.

9 The bill requires the state court administrator to annually
10 collect and publish performance information for district court
11 judges. The performance information must include information
12 relating to pretrial discretion, sentencing outcomes, appellate
13 review, and courtroom efficiency. The judicial branch must
14 create and maintain an internet site that includes a county
15 and name search interface, performance information, average
16 performance statistics for each judicial district, and a space
17 for each judge's personal statement.