

House File 2769 - Reprinted

HOUSE FILE 2769
BY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

(SUCCESSOR TO HSB 776)

(As Amended and Passed by the House May 2, 2026)

A BILL FOR

- 1 An Act relating to and making appropriations to the judicial
- 2 branch.
- 3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. JUDICIAL BRANCH.

2 1. There is appropriated from the general fund of the state
3 to the judicial branch for the fiscal year beginning July 1,
4 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, the following amounts, or so
5 much thereof as is necessary, to be used for the purposes
6 designated:

7 a. For salaries of supreme court justices, appellate court
8 judges, district court judges, district associate judges,
9 associate juvenile judges, associate probate judges, judicial
10 magistrates and staff, state court administrator, clerk of
11 the supreme court, district court administrators, clerks of
12 the district court, juvenile court officers, board of law
13 examiners, board of examiners of shorthand reporters, and
14 commission on judicial qualifications; receipt and disbursement
15 of child support payments; reimbursement of the auditor
16 of state for expenses incurred in completing audits of the
17 offices of the clerks of the district court during the fiscal
18 year beginning July 1, 2026; and maintenance, equipment, and
19 miscellaneous purposes:

20 \$202,691,378

21 b. For deposit in the revolving fund created pursuant to
22 section 602.1302, subsection 3, for jury and witness fees,
23 mileage, costs related to summoning jurors, costs and fees for
24 interpreters and translators, and reimbursement of attorney
25 fees paid by the state public defender:

26 \$ 3,600,000

27 c. For payment of expenses for court-ordered services
28 provided to juveniles who are under the supervision of juvenile
29 court services, which expenses are a charge upon the state
30 pursuant to [section 232.141, subsection 4](#):

31 \$ 3,290,000

32 (1) Of the moneys appropriated in this lettered paragraph,
33 no more than \$1,556,000 is allocated to provide school-based
34 supervision of children under [chapter 232](#), of which no more
35 than \$25,000 may be used for purposes of training.

1 (2) Notwithstanding [section 232.141](#) or any other provision
2 of law to the contrary, the moneys appropriated in this
3 lettered paragraph shall be distributed to the judicial
4 districts as determined by the state court administrator. The
5 state court administrator shall make the determination of the
6 distribution amounts within thirty days of the date on which
7 the annual census data is released.

8 (3) Notwithstanding [chapter 232](#) or any other provision of
9 law to the contrary, a district or juvenile court shall not
10 order any service which is a charge upon the state pursuant
11 to [section 232.141](#) if there are insufficient court-ordered
12 services moneys available in the district court distribution
13 amounts to pay for the service. The chief juvenile court
14 officer shall encourage use of the moneys appropriated in this
15 lettered paragraph such that there are sufficient moneys to pay
16 for all court-ordered services during the entire fiscal year.
17 The chief juvenile court officer shall attempt to anticipate
18 potential surpluses and shortfalls in the distribution amounts
19 and shall cooperatively request the state court administrator
20 to transfer moneys between the judicial districts' distribution
21 amounts as prudent.

22 (4) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary,
23 a district or juvenile court shall not order a county to pay
24 for any service provided to a juvenile pursuant to an order
25 entered under [chapter 232](#) which is a charge upon the state
26 under [section 232.141, subsection 4](#).

27 (5) Of the moneys appropriated in this lettered paragraph,
28 no more than \$83,000 may be used by the judicial branch
29 for administration of the requirements under this lettered
30 paragraph.

31 (6) Of the moneys appropriated in this lettered paragraph,
32 an amount not to exceed the actual cost of the annual
33 membership fee is allocated to the judicial branch to support
34 the interstate commission for juveniles in accordance with
35 the interstate compact for juveniles as provided in section

1 232.173.

2 (7) Notwithstanding section 8.33, moneys appropriated in
3 this lettered paragraph that remain unencumbered or unobligated
4 at the close of the fiscal year shall not revert but shall
5 remain available for expenditure for the purposes designated
6 until the close of the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2029.

7 d. For juvenile delinquent graduated sanctions services
8 pursuant to section 232.192:

9 \$ 12,253,000

10 (1) Any state moneys saved as a result of efforts by
11 juvenile court services to earn a federal fund match pursuant
12 to Tit. IV-E of the federal Family First Prevention Services
13 Act of 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-123, for juvenile court services
14 administration is appropriated to the judicial branch for
15 purposes of this lettered paragraph.

16 (2) Notwithstanding section 8.33, moneys appropriated in
17 this lettered paragraph that remain unencumbered or unobligated
18 at the close of the fiscal year shall not revert but shall
19 remain available for expenditure for the purposes designated
20 until the close of the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2029.

21 e. For salaries of business court judges and the
22 establishment and operation of a specialty business court
23 pursuant to 2026 Iowa Acts, Senate File 639, if enacted:

24 \$ 500,000

25 2. The judicial branch, except for purposes of internal
26 processing, shall use the current state budget system, the
27 state payroll system, and the Iowa finance and accounting
28 system in administration of programs and payments for services,
29 and shall not duplicate the state payroll, accounting, and
30 budgeting systems.

31 3. The judicial branch shall submit monthly financial
32 statements to the legislative services agency and the
33 department of management containing all appropriated accounts
34 in the same manner as provided in the monthly financial status
35 reports and personal services usage reports of the department

1 of administrative services. The monthly financial statements
2 must include a comparison of the dollars and percentage
3 spent of budgeted versus actual revenues and expenditures on
4 a cumulative basis for full-time equivalent positions and
5 dollars.

6 4. The judicial branch shall focus efforts upon the
7 collection of delinquent fines, penalties, court costs, fees,
8 surcharges, or similar amounts.

9 5. It is the intent of the general assembly that the offices
10 of the clerks of the district court operate in all 99 counties
11 and be accessible to the public as much as is reasonably
12 possible in order to address the relative needs of the citizens
13 of each county. An office of the clerk of the district court
14 shall be open regular courthouse hours.

15 6. In addition to the requirements for transfers under
16 section 8.39, the judicial branch shall not change the
17 appropriations from the amounts appropriated to the judicial
18 branch in this Act unless notice of the revisions is given to
19 the legislative services agency prior to the effective date.
20 The notice must include information on the judicial branch's
21 rationale for making the changes and details concerning the
22 workload and performance measures upon which the changes are
23 based.

24 7. The judicial branch shall submit a semiannual update to
25 the legislative services agency and department of management
26 specifying the amounts of fines, surcharges, and court costs
27 collected using the Iowa court information system since the
28 last report. The judicial branch shall continue to facilitate
29 the sharing of vital sentencing and other information with
30 other state departments and governmental agencies involved in
31 the criminal justice system through the Iowa court information
32 system.

33 8. The judicial branch shall provide a report to the general
34 assembly and department of management by January 1, 2027,
35 concerning the amounts received and expended from the court

1 technology and modernization fund created in section 602.8108,
2 subsection 7, during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025,
3 and ending June 30, 2026, and the plans for expenditures from
4 the fund during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and
5 ending June 30, 2027.

6 Sec. 2. CIVIL TRIALS — LOCATION. Notwithstanding any
7 provision to the contrary, for the fiscal year beginning July
8 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, if all parties in a case
9 agree, a civil trial including a jury trial may take place in a
10 county contiguous to the county with proper jurisdiction, even
11 if the contiguous county is located in an adjacent judicial
12 district or judicial election district. If the trial is moved
13 pursuant to this section, court personnel shall treat the case
14 as if a change of venue occurred.

15 Sec. 3. TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT. Notwithstanding section
16 602.1509, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and
17 ending June 30, 2027, a judicial officer may waive travel
18 reimbursement for any travel outside the judicial officer's
19 county of residence to conduct official judicial business.

20 Sec. 4. JUDICIAL OFFICER — UNPAID LEAVE. Notwithstanding
21 the annual salary rates for judicial officers established by
22 2025 Iowa Acts, chapter 158, section 6, for the fiscal year
23 beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, the supreme
24 court may by order place all judicial officers on unpaid leave
25 status on any day employees of the judicial branch are placed
26 on temporary layoff status. The biweekly pay of the judicial
27 officers shall be reduced accordingly for the pay period in
28 which the unpaid leave date occurred in the same manner as
29 for noncontract employees of the judicial branch. Through
30 the course of the fiscal year, the judicial branch may use an
31 amount equal to the aggregate amount of salary reductions due
32 to the judicial officer unpaid leave days for any purpose other
33 than for judicial salaries.

34 Sec. 5. IOWA COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK. It is the intent
35 of the general assembly that the judicial branch utilize

1 the Iowa communications network or other secure electronic
2 communications in lieu of traveling for the fiscal year
3 beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027.

4 Sec. 6. Section 602.1202, Code 2026, is amended to read as
5 follows:

6 **602.1202 Judicial council.**

7 1. A judicial council is established, consisting of the
8 chief judges of the judicial districts, the chief judge of
9 the court of appeals, and the chief justice who shall be the
10 chairperson. The council shall convene not less than twice
11 each year at times and places as ordered by the chief justice.
12 The council shall advise the supreme court with respect to the
13 supervision and administration of the judicial branch.

14 2. A meeting of the judicial council in which the judicial
15 retirement system is discussed shall not be held as a closed
16 session under section 21.5.

17 Sec. 7. Section 602.9102, Code 2026, is amended to read as
18 follows:

19 **602.9102 Administered by court administrator.**

20 1. The court administrator ~~shall be vested with authority is~~
21 authorized to administer the system and related reports and may
22 promulgate rules therefor not inconsistent with ~~the provisions~~
23 ~~of~~ this article.

24 2. The state court administrator shall advise the
25 judicial council on all determinations made by the state court
26 administrator concerning the judicial retirement system.