

Gavel to Gavel

A review of state legislation affecting the courts

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Focus: Judicial Education

Requirements for mandatory continuing education of judicial officers are often set by the state's judiciaries themselves.

Legislatures in 2009 however have been particularly active in proposing their own standards or, in some cases, relaxing existing requirements.

Connecticut's [SB 535](#) requires all judges attend annual training on computer crime, including information related to the use of computers with respect to child pornography, while [SB 6627](#) requires judges of probate complete annual continuing education on evidentiary matters.

Georgia's [SB 199](#) originally suspended for 2009 the otherwise required annual training for magistrates and probate judges. The amended version suspends the training requirements for 2009 and 2010.

Illinois' [HB 3908](#) encourages judges assigned to domestic violence cases participate in domestic violence training and recommends the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts develop such training.

Mississippi's [HB 998](#) originally exempted from new educational requirements all sitting justice court judges. The substituted version merely exempted the from the state's

new competency examinations.

New York's [AB 1508](#) requires judges attend an annual educational program or seminars on search and seizure and issuance of warrants.

Oregon's [SB 308](#) creates a Judicial Education Program in Domestic Violence and requires judges to attend and successfully complete the program.

Tennessee's [SB 386](#) allows certain municipal judges to concurrently serve as municipal recorder and exempts from specified annual continuing education requirements imposed on municipal judges.

West Virginia [HB 2840](#) and [SB 609](#) require magistrates attend an annual training conference conducted by the Administrator of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia.

Selection: Newly Introduced

[Connecticut HB 6700](#) Requires future appointments and reappointments of family support magistrates be subject to approval by the General Assembly. Sets terms of office and compensation for such magistrates. In Joint Committee on Judiciary.



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[Massachusetts SB 337](#) Prohibits candidates for judicial office to maintain a campaign fund or account subsequent to being confirmed to a judgeship. In Senate (no committee).

[Minnesota HB 1826](#) Requires vacancies in judicial office be filled by election rather than appointment. Provides that service in finishing out an unfinished term is excluded from allowable service for retirement. Requires judges retire at the end of the term in which the judge has reached the age of 70 (currently, must retire in the month they turn 70). In House State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections Committee.

[Minnesota HB 2119](#) Requires Commission on Judicial Selection participate in filling of appellate court vacancies. Requires commission solicit recommendations from statewide attorney associations and from organizations that represent minority or women attorneys. In House Civil Justice Committee.

[Minnesota SB 1788](#) Requires Commission on Judicial Selection participate in filling of appellate court vacancies. Requires commission solicit recommendations from statewide attorney associations and from organizations that represent minority or women attorneys. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[New York AB 7050](#) Makes all judicial elections nonpartisan. Prohibits judicial candidates from engaging in any partisan political activity (except registering and voting as a party member), endorsing candidates, accept or solicit party

contributions. In Assembly Judiciary Committee.

[North Carolina SB 878](#) Authorizes governor to fill all judicial vacancies. Judges subject to retentions elections. In Senate Ways & Means Committee.

[Texas HB 3995](#) Replaces partisan elections with nonpartisan retention elections. Grants supreme court power to suspend procedures for the conduct of any court proceeding affected by a disaster. Allows clerk of the supreme court to maintain records and documents in an electronic format. In House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee.

[Texas HB 4060](#) Alters contribution period for support or opposition of state judicial candidates or officeholders. In House Elections Committee.

[Texas HB 4403](#) Requires appellate judges and district court judges be selected by the governor and confirmed by the house and senate for 4-6 years. Allows judges remain in office after term indefinitely until successor confirmed by house and senate. In House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee.

[Texas HB 4436](#) Alters contribution period for support or opposition of state judicial candidates or officeholders. In House Elections Committee.

[Texas HJR 118 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Provides that a judge or other elected official vacates their office when they declare their candidacy for certain offices. In House State Affairs Committee.

[Texas HJR 120 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#)
Provides that a judge or other elected official vacates their office when they declare their candidacy for certain offices. In House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee.

[Texas HJR 138 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#)
Requires appellate judges and district court judges be selected by the governor and confirmed by the house and senate for 4-6 years. Allows judges remain in office after term indefinitely until successor confirmed by house and senate. In House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee.

[Texas SB 2226](#) Retains partisan judicial elections for initial terms. Replaces partisan re-elections with nonpartisan retention elections. In Senate (no committee).

[Texas SJR 44 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#)
Retains partisan judicial elections for initial terms. Replaces partisan re-elections with nonpartisan retention elections. In Senate (no committee).

[West Virginia HB 3216](#) Authorizes the Chief Justice to appoint senior family court judges back to the bench. In House Judiciary Committee.

Selection: Floor and Committee Activity

[Arkansas HB 2266](#) Requires candidates for district judge obtain signatures from 1% of the qualified electors or 2,000 signatures, whichever is less (currently need only 30 signatures). Approved as amended by House Judiciary Committee 3/25/09. Approved by full House 3/27/09.

[Georgia HB 156](#) Provides that elected magistrate judges who are performing ordered military duty may continue in office and be eligible for reelection during such duty. Approved by Senate Committee on Ethics 3/20/09.

[Iowa SB 283](#) Authorizes the chief justice to delay the nomination process of any judicial officer for up to 180 days for budgetary reasons. Changes the nominating process for district associate judges, associate juvenile judges, and associate probate judges and requires the district judicial nominating commission nominate persons for those positions rather than the county magistrate appointing commission. Requires nominees for those position be a resident of the judicial election district rather than just the county. Requires district judicial nominating certify 3 names for vacancies in those offices within 60 days of receiving notice of a vacancy and submit the names to the longest serving district judge in the judicial election district where the vacancy occurs and requires the judge select someone within 30 days or forfeit the right to select to the chief justice. Permits the chief justice (until 2014) to apportion vacancies in the offices of district judge, district associate judge, associate juvenile judge, or associate probate judge from the judicial election district where the vacancy occurs to another upon a finding that a substantial disparity exists in the allocation of judgeships and judicial workload between judicial election districts, and the judicial council, by majority vote, approves the apportionment. Requires all future magistrates be attorneys. Provides that a senior judge ceases to be a senior upon attaining the age of 78 years of age but may be retained for up to two, one-year

terms by the supreme court. Approved by full Senate 3/23/09.

[Kansas HB 2111](#) ORIGINAL: Deletes 2010 sunset date for commission on judicial performance. AMENDED: Replaces 2010 sunset date with 2013. Approved by Senate Judiciary Committee 3/16/09. Approved by full Senate 3/25/09.

[Minnesota SB 70](#) Establishes retention elections for judges. Expands terms of office from six to eight years. Creates a judicial performance commission. Commission must issue in year judge seeks retention evaluation of "well-qualified," "qualified," or "unqualified". Approved by Senate State and Local Government Operations and Oversight Committee 3/19/09.

[Minnesota SB 80](#) Sets contributions limits for judicial candidates: \$2,000 in an election year for the office sought and \$500 in other years. Approved as amended by Senate Judiciary 3/23/09.

[Missouri HJR 10 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) AS AMENDED: Increases from three to four the number of judicial candidates nominated by the Nonpartisan Judicial Commission for a vacancy in the office of judge of specified courts from which the Governor may make an appointment. Allows the Governor to veto the first list of candidates provided by the commission within 60 days. Provides the Governor must choose a candidate from a second list submitted by the commission within 45 days or the commission is authorized to appoint one of the nominees from the second list. Changes the composition of nonpartisan judicial commissions. Appellate Judicial

Commission: 1 Supreme Court justice, 3 members of the Missouri Bar, 4 citizens who are not members of the bar appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Circuit Judicial Commissions: 1 chief judge of district, 2 members of the Missouri Bar, 3 citizens appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Requires judicial selection process must favor openness and public access and that all hearings, debates, and votes of the commissions must be open to the public and press. Requires list of applicants for any judicial vacancy be open to the public and posted on the supreme court website. Requires all information provided to the nominating commissions be given to the Governor. Transfers approval of expenses from supreme court to office of administration. Approved as amended by House Special Standing Committee on General Laws 3/26/09.

[New Mexico HJR 5 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Requires a judge appointed through the judicial nominating process serve until the next general election following at least one full year of service on the bench. Provides that if the person wins the election they shall hold the office until the expiration of the term in effect on January 1 following the general election. Approved by Senate Judiciary Committee 3/20/09.

[West Virginia SB 591](#) Requires magistrates be elected by divisions rather than countywide. Approved by full Senate 3/25/09.

Qualifications and Terms: Newly Introduced

[West Virginia SB 609](#) Requires all new magistrates possess a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or have four years of experience as a magistrate, as well as attend an annual training conference by the Administrator of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia. Repeals distinction between those magistrates who serve five thousand or less in population and those who serve more than five thousand with respect to requirement of being "full-time" or not. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

Qualifications and Terms: Floor and Committee Activity

[Connecticut SB 535](#) Requires all judges attend annual training on computer crime, including information related to the use of computers with respect to child pornography. Drafted by Joint Committee on Judiciary 3/18/09.

[Delaware SB 24 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Makes the Chief Magistrate of the Justice of the Peace Court a "State Judge", as defined by the state's Constitution. Approved by Senate Executive Committee 3/26/09.

[Florida SB 1584](#) Provides for chief judge of judicial circuit, subject to approval by Chief Justice, to establish program for retired justices or judges to preside over civil cases & trials upon written request of one or more parties and sets compensation levels. Approved by Senate Judiciary Committee 3/25/09.

[Georgia SB 199](#) ORIGINAL: Suspends for 2009 the otherwise required annual training for magistrates and probate judges. AMENDED: Suspends for 2009 and 2010 required annual training for magistrates and probate judges. Approved by House Judiciary Committee 3/25/09.

[Illinois HB 3908](#) Encourages judges assigned to domestic violence cases participate in domestic violence training. Recommends is Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts develop such training. Approved by full House 3/24/09.

Rule Making Authority: Newly Introduced

[Connecticut HB 6710](#) Authorizes the Chief Justice or Chief Court Administrator to take "any action necessary" to ensure operation of the state courts in an emergency. Authorizes e-filing of various documents. Increases to \$2 million the dollar limit of projects for the alteration, repair or addition to Judicial Branch facilities that remain under the control of the Judicial Branch. In Joint Committee on Judiciary.

[Delaware SB 25](#) Provides for the operation of the courts in the event of an emergency. Grants the Chief Justice the authority to declare a judicial emergency when there are emergency circumstances affecting one or more court facilities with such order limited to an initial duration of 30 days but renewable for 30 day periods. Allows Chief Justice or order the conducting of courts outside their normal county, extend statutes of limitations, etc. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Minnesota HB 1691](#) Requires, subject to control of the presiding judge, electronic media and still photography coverage of public trial court proceedings. In House Civil Justice Committee.

[Minnesota SB 1860](#) Requires, subject to control of the presiding judge, electronic media and still photography coverage of public trial court proceedings. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Nevada AB 496](#) Requires the Commission on Judicial Discipline, within 18 months after the receipt of a complaint, to either resolve the complaint or authorize the filing of a formal statement of charges relating to the complaint. Adds public admonishment and public reprimand to the existing forms of discipline the Commission is authorized to use for a judge who is the subject of a complaint. Authorizes a person who files a complaint against a judge with the commission, the judge who is the subject of the complaint or a witness to disclose information concerning the complaint and any investigation or proceedings concerning the complaint. Authorizes the Commission to issue an explanatory statement, under certain circumstances, concerning a complaint filed with the Commission under certain circumstances in which the complaint is made public. Requires the Commission prepare annual and biennial reports concerning, among other things, the disposition of cases filed with the Commission. Authorizes the Commission to dismiss a complaint with a letter of caution under certain circumstances. Provides, with exceptions, a 3-year statute of limitations for filing a complaint with the Commission concerning alleged misconduct or incapacity of a judge. Sets deadlines for judges to

answer complaints, a hearing on the charges, and a final determinate by the commission. In Assembly Judiciary Committee.

[New York AB 6921](#) Permits the governor or the chief judge to temporarily relocate court terms where there are circumstances or the threat thereof which prevent the safe and practical holding of any term.
<http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menugetf.cgi>
In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[North Carolina SB 601](#) Repeals district attorney's power to set the calendar for criminal cases in superior court and transfers authority to the court. Allows for transference of judges to district to contend with caseload and requires reasons be posted online. In Senate Committee on Judiciary I.

[North Carolina SB 861](#) Permits AOC Director to select retirement program for enrollment. Allows AOC Director to create an Internal Audit Division and specifies audits to be conducted. Allows courts to be closed for "catastrophic conditions" and defines the term. Allows Chief Justice to extend certain deadlines for "catastrophic conditions" and to issue any emergency directives necessary to ensure the continuing operation of essential trial or appellate court functions for 30 days, subject to 30 day renewals. In Senate Committee on Appropriations/Base Budget.

[North Carolina SB 862](#) Delegates to the Supreme Court the power to adopt and amend the rules of civil procedure and rules of evidence for the trial divisions. Permits legislature to amend or veto any such rules created. In Senate Committee on Judiciary I.

[Texas HB 4314](#) Provides the court of criminal appeals may adopt rules and procedures providing for and governing the electronic filing of briefs, pleadings, and other documents for capital cases in that court. In House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.

Rule Making Authority: Floor and Committee Activity

[Connecticut HB 6252](#) Requires the Judicial Department establish employment standards for judicial marshals and make such employment standards publicly available on the judiciary web site. Drafted by Joint Committee on Judiciary 3/18/09.

[Florida HB 369](#) Provides for chief judge of judicial circuit, subject to approval by Chief Justice, to establish program for retired justices or judges to preside over civil cases & trials upon written request of one or more parties and sets compensation levels. Approved by House Civil Justice Committee 3/24/09.

[Kansas SB 134](#) Grants supreme court authority to establish additional charges to court fees and filings charges, notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary. Approved as amended by House Judiciary Committee 3/24/09. Approved by full House 3/25/09. Senate does not concur in House amendments. Conference Committee set.

[Montana SB 197](#) Defines court transcripts costs. Permits office of the court administrator to adjust courts annually based on consumer price index. House concurred with Senate amendments 3/21/09. To Governor for approval.

[Oregon SB 268](#) Authorizes Chief Justice of Supreme Court to make rules relating to data that state courts may require to be submitted by parties and other persons for purpose of distinguishing particular persons from other persons with same or similar name. Approved by House Judiciary Committee 3/12/09. Approved by full House 3/17/09. To Governor for approval.

Structure Changes: Newly Introduced

[Alabama SB 507](#) Reduces Supreme Court through attrition from 9 to 7. In Senate Governmental Affairs Committee.

[Connecticut HB 6708](#) Establishes a separate criminal docket for hearing criminal matters and providing diversionary services for defendants who have returned from service with the armed services, similar to the criminal docket for matters in which a defendant is a drug-dependent person. In Joint Committee on Judiciary.

[New York SB 3632 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Allows a district court judge to temporarily serve as a family court judge in the judicial district of his or her residence. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[North Carolina HB 666](#) Specifies DWI Courts as "drug courts". In House Committee on Mental Health Reform.

[North Carolina SB 511](#) Specifies DWI Courts as "drug courts". In House Committee on Judiciary I.

[Texas HB 3595](#) The bill would authorize the presiding judges of the administrative judicial regions, after conferring with the

judges of courts in their regions with a county population of not more than 200,000, to appoint one or more full-time or part-time associate judges to operate a drug court program. In Senate Corrections Committee.

[Texas HB 3763](#) Restructures jurisdiction and administration of, and procedures relating to, certain courts in this state, including procedures for appeals. In House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee.

[Texas HB 4549](#) Abolishes court of criminal appeals. Transfers all cases/jurisdiction to supreme court. In House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee.

[Texas SB 1993](#) Abolishes court of criminal appeals. Transfers all cases/jurisdiction to supreme court. In Senate Jurisprudence Committee.

Structure Changes: Floor and Committee Activity

[Florida SB 878](#) Directs and provides legislative purpose and intent with respect to a unified family court program throughout the state, including the practice of "one family, one judge." Approved as substituted by Senate Judiciary Committee 3/4/09.

[Georgia HB 495](#) Allows judges of the probate court to appoint associate judges of the probate court. Provides for the associate judges' authority, compensation, and qualifications. Approved by Senate Committee on Judiciary 3/25/09. Approved by full Senate 3/26/09.

[Maryland HB 794 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Authorizes the General Assembly to create a Death Penalty Court to

have original and exclusive jurisdiction over all offenses punishable by death. Rejected by House Judiciary Committee 3/23/09.

[Tennessee SB 1810](#) Creates a city court to be administered and presided over by a city judge instead of authorizing the council in a modified city manager-council charter by ordinance to establish and provide for the administration of a city court. Approved by full Senate 3/23/09.

[Tennessee SB 2020](#) Creates a municipal court for any municipality that does not have such a court established by the general assembly. Approved by full Senate 3/23/09.

Jurisdiction: Newly Introduced

[Indiana SR 30](#) Requests Commission on Courts or other appropriate committee study requirement that small claims cases over \$1,500 require an attorney to file or defend. In Senate (no committee).

Jurisdiction: Floor and Committee Activity

[Georgia HB 220](#) Provide a uniform 90 days for judges of the superior, state, or city courts for issuing orders on motions (currently, judges in counties below 100,000 population are given 30 days). Approved by Senate Judiciary Committee 3/25/09.

[Maryland SB 468](#) Increasing from \$10,000 to \$20,000, the maximum amount in controversy in a civil action in which a party may not demand a jury trial. Approved by full Senate 3/24/09.

[Maryland SB 469 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Increasing from more than \$10,000 to more than \$20,000 the amount in controversy in civil proceedings in which the right to a trial by jury may be limited by legislation. Approved by full Senate 3/24/09.

[New Mexico SB 590](#) Increases jurisdiction in metropolitan and magistrates courts to \$15,000 from \$10,000. Approved by full Senate 3/15/09.

Salary and Budget: Newly Introduced

[Connecticut HB 1164](#) Requires Chief Court Administrator review the functions and activities of the Judicial Department in order to assign priority for the continued funding of such functions not later than January 1, 2010. In Joint Committee on Appropriations.

[Connecticut SB 1157](#) Increases various filing fees and allocates funds to provide legal services to the poor and technology projects within the Judicial Branch. Approved as substituted by Joint Committee on Judiciary 3/27/09.

[Delaware SB 37](#) Repeals requirement that fees chargeable in the Justice of the Peace Court be set by statute. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Florida SB 1086](#) Re-creates the Federal Grants Trust Fund within the state courts system without modification. Abrogates provisions relating to the termination of the trust fund. In Senate (no committee).

[Georgia SB 275](#) Creates Municipal Court Clerks' Retirement Fund of Georgia. In Senate Committee on Retirement.

[Massachusetts SB 1625](#) Alters methods chief justice for administration and management may transfer appropriated funds between trial court departments In Senate (no committee).

[Massachusetts SB 1763](#) Creates Judicial Commission on Judicial Compensation, Benefits and Pension. In Senate (no committee).

[Minnesota HB 1540](#) Applies \$1 per page fee for most court papers filed with the court. Directs funds go to supreme court. In House Finance Committee.

[Minnesota HB 1827](#) Deletes provision allowing retired justice temporarily called back into service to receive full retirement pay and temporary salary. Alters numerous fees, fines and costs. In House Public Safety Policy and Oversight Committee.

[Minnesota SB 1627](#) Deletes provision allowing retired justice temporarily called back into service to receive full retirement pay and temporary salary. Alters numerous fees, fines and costs. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Minnesota SB 1786](#) Applies \$1 per page fee for most court papers filed with the court. Directs funds go to supreme court. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Pennsylvania HB 1038](#) Freezes automatic cost of living adjustments for judicial and other salaries. In House Rules Committee.

[Texas HB 4543](#) Authorizes county officials to pay district court judges an annual cost-of-living increase. In House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee.

Salary and Budget: Floor and Committee Activity

[Arkansas HCR 1010](#) Requests Congress approve legislation to implement a court fee intercept program. Approved by full House 2/19/09.

[Arkansas SB 190](#) Encourages judicial service and retention through retirement program incentives. Approved by full Senate 3/24/09. Approved by Joint Public Retirement and Social Security Committee 3/25/09.

[Arkansas SB 801](#) Creates a task force to study the funding of the state judiciary. Approved by House Judiciary Committee 3/25/09.

[Colorado SB 38](#) Removes the 2010 repeal of the docket fees for county court civil actions. Approved by full House 3/24/09.

[Connecticut SB 1157](#) Increases various filing fees and allocates funds to provide legal services to the poor and technology projects within the Judicial Branch. Approved as substituted by Joint Committee on Judiciary 3/27/09.

[Florida HB 7069](#) Re-creates the Federal Grants Trust Fund within the state courts system without modification. Abrogates provisions relating to the termination of the trust fund. Approved by Criminal & Civil Justice Appropriations Committee 3/19/09. Approved by Appropriations Council on

General Government & Health Care 3/23/09.

[Florida HB 7075](#) Re-creates the Operating Trust Fund within the state courts system without modification. Abrogates provisions relating to the termination of the trust fund. Approved by Criminal & Civil Justice Appropriations Committee 3/19/09. Approved by Appropriations Council on General Government & Health Care 3/23/09.

[Florida SB 2694](#) Specifies that the Legislature must grant specific authority in the General Appropriations Act before a state agency or the judicial branch may make certain transfers deemed necessary by reason of changed conditions. Approved as substituted by Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee 3/18/09.

[Georgia HR 624](#) Creates committee to examine fees collected by superior court clerks, magistrate judges and others. Approved by House Committee on Ways & Means 3/25/09.

[Georgia SB 109](#) Removes duties and obligations regarding retirement and pension from the Department of Administrative Services and transferring them to the Council of Superior Court Judges of Georgia, the Council of State Court Judges of Georgia, the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of the State of Georgia, and the Council of Juvenile Court Judges, as appropriate. Approved by full Senate 3/25/09.

[Illinois SB 63](#) Requires that the Compensation Review Board file separate

reports with respect to (i) State executive branch constitutional officers and General Assembly members and (ii) judges and all other offices. Provides that a report is effective if approved in whole or reduced by a resolution adopted by the General Assembly (now, effective unless disapproved in whole or reduced by a resolution adopted by the General Assembly). Requires a separate resolution and vote for each report. Approved by full Senate 3/25/09.

[Illinois SB 190](#) Revamps the Compensation Review Board members and membership criteria. Requires Board prepare and file a separate report with respect to each of the 3 branches of State government (now, the Board prepares and files one report). Provides that a Compensation Review Board report is effective if approved in whole or reduced by a resolution adopted by the General Assembly (now, effective unless disapproved in whole or reduced by a resolution adopted by the General Assembly). Approved by full Senate 3/25/09.

[New Mexico HJM 73](#) Requests congress enact federal legislation that would add unpaid local and state court fines and fees to those delinquent obligations that can be intercepted through the United States Department of the Treasury offset program. Approved by Senate 3/19/09.

[New Mexico SB 277](#) Creates electronic services fund to be administered by the administrative office of the courts for the purpose of defraying the costs of operating and maintaining electronic filing services and providing public access to electronic documents. Authorizes supreme court to set

electronic services fees in all courts. Approved by House Judiciary Committee 3/18/09.

[Texas HB 765](#) Requires a commissioners court to pay a judge of a statutory probate court replacement benefit pay and longevity pay under the same conditions and in the same amount as a district judge is entitled to receive from the state. Approved by House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee 3/25/09.

Other: Newly Introduced

[Colorado HB 1316](#) Makes it a crime to post the personal information of a judge, magistrate, or prosecutor on the internet if the dissemination of the information poses an imminent and serious safety threat. Allows judge, magistrate or prosecutor to request public records containing their address or phone number be confidential. In House Judiciary Committee.

[Connecticut SB 1161](#) Provides that temporary employees of the Judicial Department are eligible for full-time employment after six months of continuous service and are to be permitted to apply for permanent positions within the Judicial Department. In Joint Committee on Judiciary.

[Hawaii SR 76](#) Requests judiciary waive copy fees for access to and copies of judges' redacted financial disclosure statements. In Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee.

[Hawaii SR 84](#) Encourages judiciary to allow attorneys appearing in state courts to wear

aloha attire. In Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee.

[Massachusetts HB 3770](#) Makes chief justice for administration and management and a chief justices for each of the departments of the trial court "subject to the superintendence power of the supreme judicial court". In House (no committee).

[Massachusetts SB 1562](#) Finds that the failure of a court to display an American flag in the courtroom "is a violation of due process". In Senate (no committee).

[Massachusetts SB 1567](#) Defines recusal standards and obligations. Allows any party to unilaterally declare the judge biased and have the judge removed one time per case. In Senate (no committee).

[Massachusetts SB 1624](#) Makes chief justice for administration and management and a chief justices for each of the departments of the trial court "subject to the superintendence power of the supreme judicial court". In Senate (no committee).

[Massachusetts SB 1667](#) Grants the chief justice for administration and management the power to appoint, dismiss and assign probation officers to the Probate and Family Courts. In Senate (no committee).

[Massachusetts SB 1701](#) Requires Supreme Judicial Court tabulate and report on all cases heard on appeal by the Supreme Judicial Court and Appeal Courts. In Senate (no committee).

[Massachusetts SB 1807](#) Requires judges refer motions to recuse to another judge.

Specifies requirements for recusal or disqualification. In Senate (no committee).

[North Carolina SB 623](#) Creates three pilot self-serve centers in locations to be designated by the Administrative Office of the Courts. Requires centers develop forms and instructions to address the increasing numbers of persons who either cannot afford representation or choose to represent themselves in family law matters and in some civil litigation. In Senate Committee on Appropriations/Base Budget.

[North Carolina SB 659](#) Requires judges refer motions to recuse to another judge selected by the Chief Justice. In Senate Committee on Judiciary I.

[North Carolina SB 797](#) Specifies a judge may disqualify for any reason that renders the judge unable to perform the duties required of the judge in the proceeding in an impartial manner. Requires any disqualification be in a written statement giving the specific reason or reasons for the disqualification. In Senate Committee on Judiciary I.

[Texas HB 4384](#) Repeals provisions granting special license plates to judges/justices of the supreme court or court of criminal appeals. Allows any "state judge" to obtain special license plates with phrase "State Judge" on plate. Allows for similar plates for county judges and federal judges. In House Transportation Committee.

[Texas HB 4548](#) Requires recusal by a judge/justice of the supreme court of court of criminal appeals where the judge's campaign received \$1,000 over the prior four years from a party to the case, an

attorney of record in the case, the law firm of an attorney of record in the case, the managing agent of a party to the case, a member of the board of directors of a party to the case, or an election committee established or administered by a person who is a party to the case. In House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee.

[Texas SB 2325](#) Requires confidentiality for the "discussions, thought processes, or individual votes" of members of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct or their employees and the identity of a confidential complainant or informant. In Senate (no committee).

Other: Floor and Committee Activity

[Connecticut HB 6545](#) Allows state managers in judiciary and other branches, excluding bureau heads, to bargain collectively. Approved by Joint Committee on Labor and Public Employees 3/25/09.

[Georgia HB 545](#) Requires Administrative Office of the Courts create a system for certification of process servers. Approved by Senate Committee on Public Safety 3/26/09.

[Iowa HB 697](#) Provides that a person who harasses a judicial officer, court employee, or a family member of a judicial officer or court employee with the intent to interfere with or improperly influence, or in retaliation for, their official acts commits an aggravated misdemeanor. Approved by Senate Judiciary Committee 3/25/09.

[New Mexico HB 529](#) Adds municipal judges to judicial standards commission. Approved by full Senate 3/17/09.

[New Mexico HJM 66](#) Requests attorney general create a task force to study the viability and merit of allowing audio-video technology in court proceedings. Approved by full Senate 3/20/09.

[New Mexico HJR 12 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Adds municipal judges to judicial standards commission. Approved by Senate Judiciary Committee 3/20/09. Tennessee

[Tennessee SB 1711](#) 2009 Adds former municipal court judges to eligibility list for judiciary registration plates. Approved by Senate Ways and Means Committee 3/25/09.

[Texas HB 763](#) Clarifies that the presiding judge of the statutory probate courts assigns a judge to hear the case when the judge of the court recuses himself or herself, or when a motion for the recusal or disqualification of the judge is granted. Approved by House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee 3/25/09.

[Washington HB 1369](#) Allows clerk of the superior court to keep an offices at places in a county other than the county seat. Approved by Senate Government Operations Committee 3/23/09.

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