

Gavel to Gavel

A review of state legislation affecting the courts

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Focus: Judicial Officers Carrying Firearms

At least 5 legislatures have considered and adopted legislation in the last several years to make it easier for judicial officers to carry firearms inside and outside the courthouse. Already this year 3 additional states have introduced similar bills.

2006 Laws

Louisiana's [SB 178](#) allowed retired and active judges to carry a firearm under terms similar to that of law enforcement provided they received annual certification from the state's Council on Peace Officer Standards and Training.

Georgia's [HB 1044](#) provided that part-time municipal and city court judges would be treated as full-time judges for purposes of being exempt from certain state weapons requirements.

2007 Laws

Oklahoma's SB 145 permitted the carrying and use of firearms within courthouses by a

district judge, associate district judge or special district judge provided the judge possesses a valid concealed handgun license and places their name on a list maintained by the Administrative Director of the Courts.

Texas's [HB 1889](#) provided that certain laws regarding the unlawful carrying of a weapon and the locations in which weapons are prohibited do not apply to a bailiff escorting a judge and provided a defense to the prosecution of an offense regarding a concealed handgun license holder who carries a weapon onto certain premises if the person carrying the weapon is a bailiff or judge. [HB 2300](#) expanded the number of places judges, justices, district attorneys, criminal district attorneys, and county attorneys were permitted to carry their concealed weapons to include premises that serve alcohol, sporting events, hospitals, nursing homes, amusement parks, places of worship, and meetings of governmental entities. It also directed the Department of Public Safety to indicate on the concealed handgun licenses issued to those people listed, the title they held.



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2008 Laws

Michigan's [SB 505](#) amended the handgun licensure act to exclude a state court judge or retired judge who was licensed under the act from provisions prohibiting an individual who is licensed to carry a concealed pistol, or who is exempt from licensure, from carrying a concealed pistol on certain premises.

Bills

Florida's [HB 561/SB 1074](#) provide that any active, retired or senior status judge who is otherwise in compliance with concealed weapons requirements may carry a firearm at any time & into any place except a prison, jail, airport, or where carrying a concealed weapon is restricted by federal law.

Tennessee's [HB 855/SB 1275](#) and [HB 856/SB 1274](#) expand the areas and times a judge with a permit may carry a handgun. [HB 521/SB 245](#) and [HB 724/SB 1129](#) allow judges to carry firearms anywhere law enforcement can carry if they have permit or appropriate training.

West Virginia's [HB 2075](#) allows family court judges to carry concealed deadly weapons without obtaining a license.

Selection: Newly Introduced

[Arkansas HB 1401](#) Repeals statute making it unlawful for district, circuit, Supreme Court or Court of Appeals judges/justices from participating in the campaign of any candidate for office at any election, other than his or her own. In House Committee on Judiciary.

[Illinois HB 887](#) Establishes a voluntary system of public financing of campaigns for the offices of judges of the Illinois Supreme and Appellate Courts, administered by the State Board of Elections. Specifies limits on campaign contributions and expenditures with respect to all candidates for those offices. In House Rules Committee.

[Missouri HB 633](#) Imposes campaign contribution limits. For judicial candidates \$325, \$650 or \$1,275 (depending on size of district elected from). In House (no committee).

[Missouri HB 687](#) Imposes campaign contribution limits. For judicial candidates \$325, \$650 or \$1,275 (depending on size of district elected from). In House (no committee).

[Rhode Island HB 5433](#) Vests with the governor the sole authority to nominate, on the basis of merit, from a list submitted by the judicial nominating commission with the advice and consent of the senate, all judges and magistrates, to all courts. (Currently presiding judges & chief judges appoint certain magistrates). In House Judiciary Committee.

[Tennessee HB 26](#) and [SB 1839](#) Adds one nonlawyer to judicial selection commission thereby increasing the membership of the commission from 17 to 18 persons. Prefiled.

[Tennessee HB 428](#) and [SB 51](#) Requires meetings of judicial selection commission regarding judicial vacancies to be held in public. Prefiled.

[Tennessee HB 581](#) and [SB 462](#) Removes from sunset provisions judicial evaluation

commission and judicial selection commission Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 601](#) and [SB 480](#) Changes composition of the judicial selection commission. Makes all meetings and records of the commission open to the public. Requires judicial applicants to submit to work and credit history checks and to submit to criminal record checks. Requires that certain judges be elected by voters within the respective grand divisions of the state. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 778](#) and [SB 1369](#) Creates a Judicial Advisory Panel to assist the governor in the selection of individuals to fill vacancies in judicial offices. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 1075](#) and [SB 376](#) Revises nominating process by speaker of senate and speaker of house of representatives for judicial evaluation commission. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 1076](#) and [SB 375](#) Extends judicial evaluation commission sunset date to June 30, 2013. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 1082](#) and [SB 380](#) Extends sunset date for judicial selection commission to June 30, 2013. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 1086](#) and [SB 379](#) Revises appointment process of judicial selection commission. Clarifies that person on panel rejected by the governor cannot be on second panel of nominees. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 1150](#) and [SB 1231](#) Abolishes judicial selection commission. Requires "All trial court and appellate court judges shall be elected in accordance with

the constitution of the state of Tennessee." Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 1233](#) and [SB 1847](#) Removes authorization for the judicial selection commission to meet in private. Prefiled.

Tennessee [SB 1378](#) Prohibits the judicial selection commission from meeting in private. Prefiled.

Tennessee [SB 1565](#) Revises composition of judicial selection commission. Prohibits members from being reappointed. Requires judicial candidates to receive 60 percent of votes cast to be retained in office. Prefiled.

Tennessee [SB 1573](#) Raises number of words from 600 to 1,000 that a report from the judicial evaluation commission on each appellate judge may contain. Prefiled.

Tennessee [SB 1715](#) Rewrites various provisions of the judicial selection and judicial evaluation provisions. Prefiled.

Tennessee [SB 1806](#) Requires judicial selection committee to hold selection meetings in public. Requires committee to rate all applicants rather than submit three nominees to governor. Prefiled.

Tennessee [SB 1807](#) Removes authorization for the judicial selection commission to meet in private. Prefiled.

Texas [SB 782](#) Creates retention elections for appellate courts. In Senate (no committee).

Texas [SJR 23 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Creates retention elections for appellate courts. Vacancies to be filled by

Governor with Senate confirmation. In Senate (no committee).

[Washington SB 5912](#) Provides for the public funding for supreme court campaigns. In Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee.

[West Virginia SB 136](#) Requires Supreme Court justices to be elected on a nonpartisan ballot. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Wisconsin SB 40](#) Makes numerous changes in the campaign finance law affecting campaigns for the office of justice of the supreme court. Creates a democracy trust fund to finance supreme court elections. Allows for public financing of all supreme court elections (currently, no funding is provided for primary campaigns). Lowers contribution limits from individuals and committees to \$1,000. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

Selection: Floor and Committee Activity

[Arkansas HB 1263](#) Provides that should a vacancy occur in the office of county judge during a declared emergency, the office is to be temporarily filled based on a list previously prepared by the county judge designating 3 people, in order of succession. Approved as amended by Senate City, County and Local Affairs Committee 2/12/09.

[Indiana HB 1491](#) ORIGINAL: Eliminates merit selection system for election of superior court judges in St. Joseph County and replaces with nonpartisan elections. FLOOR AMENDED: Same, but puts in campaign contributions limits for St. Joseph

County superior court race: \$500 per person, \$1000 per lawfirm, \$10,000 total from all sources. Approved as amended by full House 2/12/09.

[Kansas HB 2111](#) ORIGINAL: Deletes 2010 sunset date for commission on judicial performance. AMENDED: Replaces 2010 sunset date with 2013. Approved as amended by House Judiciary Committee 2/11/09. Approved by full House 2/12/09. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[New Hampshire CACR 6 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Requires clerks of the probate court shall be appointed instead of elected. Voted Inexpedient to Legislate by Senate Judiciary Committee 2/11/09.

[Oklahoma SJR 27 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Allows the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives to each select one member of the Judicial Nominating Commission. Approved as amended by Senate Judiciary Committee 2/10/09.

[Virginia HB 1804](#) Requires the General Assembly to approve retired judges and justices temporarily recalled to duty by the chief justice. Approved as substituted by House Committee for Courts of Justice 2/6/09. Rejected by full House 2/9/09.

Qualifications and Terms: Newly Introduced

[Arkansas HJR 1006 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Increases terms of office for clerks of the circuit courts, county clerks, county judges, and other county officers from 2 to 4 years. Permits recall of county judges and other county elected officials. In

House Committee on State Agencies & Governmental Affairs.

Tennessee [HB 563](#) and [SB 478](#) Allows members of the ethics commission to hold or qualify for judicial office with no waiting period. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 730](#) and [SB 386](#) Allows certain municipal judges to concurrently serve as municipal recorder and exempts certain municipal judges from certain annual continuing education requirements imposed on municipal judges. Prefiled.

Tennessee [SB 1870](#) Requires judges of the court of appeals and court of criminal appeals to be licensed to practice law in Tennessee for at least five years prior to qualification for election. Prefiled.

Qualification and Terms: Floor and Committee Activity

Oregon [HB 2284](#) Specifies that where the Chief Justice is the subject of an inquiry as to his/her inability to continue, it is the justice of the Supreme Court that has served the longest period of time as a judge of that court that may file a request for an investigation into the disability. Approved by full House 2/3/09. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

Virginia [HB 1753](#) ORIGINAL: Provides that if a full-time district court judge is convicted of a felony or Class 1 misdemeanor during his term of office, such term shall expire 30 days after the commencement of the next regular session of the General Assembly notwithstanding the term for which such judge was elected. AMENDED: Same, but requires "all rights

of appeal [be] terminated" before automatic expiration of term. Approved as amended by House Committee for Courts of Justice 2/6/09. Approved by full House 2/10/09. In Senate Committee for Courts of Justice.

Virginia [SB 1081](#) Clarifies that a special justice serves at the pleasure of the chief justice of the judicial circuit in which he serves, rather than the specific chief justice that makes the original appointment. Approved by full Senate 2/9/09.

Virginia [SB 856](#) Increases the mandatory retirement age for judges from age 70 to age 75. Rejected by full Senate 2/9/09.

Rule Making Authority: Newly Introduced

Connecticut [SB 912](#) Requires all court documents be accessible to the public, except those records that relate directly to decision-making in individual cases. In Joint Committee on Government Administration and Elections.

Connecticut [HJR 99 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Specifies that judges of the Superior Court shall have the power to prescribe general rules of practice and procedure but such rules shall not abridge, enlarge or modify any substantive right. Requires proposed rules be submitted to the General Assembly. In Joint Committee on Government Administration and Elections.

Florida [SB 1424](#) Encourages the Supreme Court to adopt rules authorizing a party to appeal an order denying a motion for summary judgment. In Senate (no committee).

Illinois HB 66 Creates the Task Force on Electronic Access to Circuit Court Records. Provides that the Task Force shall study laws and procedures relating to electronic access by the public to circuit court records and the exemptions from such disclosure and shall submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly by December 31, 2009. In House Rules Committee

New York SB 2043 Authorizes audio-visual coverage of judicial proceedings subject to judicial discretion and supervision. Requires office of court administration establish an educational program for audio-visual coverage of judicial proceedings. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

New York SB 2046 Provides that the chief administrator of the courts may direct the use of mechanical recording of testimony. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

Tennessee SB 1571 Provides that in order to practice law, person must receive license issued by supreme court and comply with Rule 6 of the rules of the supreme court, except for rule 19 pro hac vice admissions. Prefiled.

Texas SB 780 Requires disclosure of the individual vote of each member of the Texas Supreme Court on a petition for review. In Senate (no committee).

Washington HB 2216 Transfers all mandatory, regulatory, licensing, and disciplinary functions of the Washington state bar association to the state supreme court. In House Judiciary Committee.

Washington HJR 4210 (Constitutional Amendment) Requires that all mandatory,

regulatory, licensing, and disciplinary functions regarding the practice of law and administration of justice reside exclusively in the supreme court. In House Judiciary Committee.

Wisconsin AB 23 Requires all supreme court and court of appeals conferences, including preargument conferences, postargument decision conferences, opinion conferences, decision conferences, and administrative conferences be open to the public. In Assembly Judiciary and Ethics Committee.

Rule Making Authority: Floor and Committee Activity

Arkansas SB 33 Amends Supreme Court Rule 5-2. Requires that, except for an order affirmed without an opinion, all opinions (published or "unpublished") are precedent and may be relied upon and cited by any party in any proceeding. Specifies that whether an opinion is included in the Arkansas Reports or Arkansas Appellate Reports shall have no effect on its precedential value. Approved by full House 2/11/09. Sent to Governor 2/12/09.

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 by Senate Judiciary Committee 2/9/09.

New Hampshire SB 34 Requires that registers of probate be present at the probate office in accordance with personnel rules established by the supreme court. Grants Registers of probate the benefits of employment in the judicial branch and

requires they be subject to the personnel rules established by the supreme court. Approved by Senate Judiciary Committee 2/11/09.

Oklahoma HJR 1028 (Constitutional Amendment) Requires Oklahoma Bar Association submit changes to the Oklahoma Rules of Professional Conduct, Code of Judicial Conduct, any court rule adopted for inclusion in the Rules for District Courts of Oklahoma or Oklahoma Supreme Court Rules, and any rule governing admission to the practice of law in the State of Oklahoma, to the Legislature for review on or before April 1 of each year. Approved by House Rules Committee 2/5/09.

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 full Senate 2/4/09. In House Judiciary Committee.

Oregon SB 270 Authorizes Chief Justice of Supreme Court to establish procedures for closing courts in emergencies and establish standards for determining when courts are closed for purposes of rules and laws. Authorizes presiding judge of judicial district to delegate exercise of administrative powers to another judge or to trial court administrator. Approved by full Senate 2/4/09. In House Judiciary Committee.

Virginia SB 1442 Gives the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court the responsibility for the operation of maintenance of a statewide case

management system and financial management system, for related technology improvements, and requires that he permit an interface to any circuit court that uses automation or technology improvements provided by a private vendor or the locality. The costs of designing and implementing any such interface shall be the responsibility of the circuit court clerk. Approved as amended by Senate Committee for Courts of Justice 2/9/09. Approved by full Senate 2/10/09.

Wyoming HB 55 Permits the state supreme court, based on caseload studies, to determine where within a circuit the circuit court judge shall reside. Approved by full Senate as amended by the Senate 2/11/09. Full House concurred in Senate amendments 2/12/09. Sent to Governor.

Structure Changes: Newly Introduced

Arkansas HB 1398 Requires consolidation of city courts with district courts in specified counties. Creates additional pilot state district court judgeships. In House Committee on Judiciary.

Kentucky HB 354 Modifies membership of Judicial Council to include four (4) non-family court Circuit Judges and three (3) family court Circuit Judges (currently, 4 family or non-family Circuit Judges) and the immediate past president and president-elect of the Kentucky Association of Circuit Court Clerks. In House Judiciary Committee.

Kentucky SB 117 Modifies membership of Judicial Council to include four (4) non-family court Circuit Judges and three (3)

family court Circuit Judges (currently, 4 family or non-family Circuit Judges) and the immediate past president and president-elect of the Kentucky Association of Circuit Court Clerks. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

Maine HB 374 Moves all traffic cases from the violations bureau of the District Court to the office of the Secretary of State. In House Judiciary Committee.

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. In House Judiciary Committee.

Tennessee HB 1405 and 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. Prefiled.

Tennessee Structure Changes HB 318 and SB 62 Requires judicial council to draft proposal reconstituting existing judicial districts by January 1, 2010, based upon population and provides that future determinations as to need for new judicial positions be based exclusively on population rather than weighted caseload formula. Prefiled.

Tennessee HB 600 and SB 426 Requires the general assembly to redistrict the judicial districts by November 1, 2010, and every 10 years thereafter, to reflect the increases and shifts in population. Prefiled.

Tennessee HB 667 and SB 57 Provides that each county with a population in excess of 100,000 according to 2010 federal census be served by at least three divisions of general sessions court to be presided over by at least three full-time judges. Prefiled.

Tennessee HB 681 and SB 646 Creates the unified family court pilot program. Prefiled.

Tennessee SB 1422 Creates the unified family court pilot program. Prefiled.

Structure Changes: Floor and Committee Activity

NONE

Jurisdiction: Newly Introduced

Maine HB 331 Increase to \$10,000 from \$4,500 small claims jurisdiction. In House Judiciary Committee.

Missouri HJR 28 (Constitutional Amendment) Removes Supreme Court's power to try impeachments and places it in the Senate. In House (no committee).

New Jersey ACR 222 (Constitutional Amendment) Prohibits courts from hearing challenges to education funding levels unless specifically authorized by the Legislature. In Assembly Education 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 House Judiciary Committee 2/6/09.

Oklahoma SB 815 Increases small claims jurisdiction to \$25,000 from \$6,000. Approved as amended by Senate Judiciary Committee 2/12/09.

Virginia SB 854 Directs the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court to establish by January 1, 2010, no less than two and no more than five mental health courts in Virginia for nonviolent offenders with serious mental illnesses. Approved by full Senate as substituted 2/10/09.

Salary and Budget: Newly Introduced

Maine SB 184 Increases judicial salaries to levels that would have been achieved if the recommendations made in the Judicial Compensation Commission's 1996 report had been fully implemented. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

Minnesota HB 586 Institutes a freeze on salaries and wage rates for judicial and other government employees. In House State and Local Government Operations Reform, Technology and Elections Committee.

Nevada AB 156 Requires district courts, justice courts and municipal courts to contract with private debt collectors or other persons to collect certain debts. In Assembly Committee on Judiciary.

New Mexico HB 648 Changes the percentage of retirement paid by the courts for each member in office and changes the state retirement contribution, through the administrative office of the courts. Requires

that the civil case docketing fee and fee for a jury trial be deposited into the General Fund. In House Judiciary Committee.

Tennessee HB 974 and SB 790 Directs the administrative office of the courts to study the efficiency of requiring a transfer of funds to close case files for indigent criminal defendants. Prefiled.

Tennessee SB 1270 Clarifies that the administrative director of the courts shall not administer any funding or grants provided to any court appointed special advocate programs from the court appointed special advocate fund. Prefiled.

West Virginia HB 2060 Requires magistrate courts to maintain records relating to successful collection rates on judgments and to make reports of these available to claimants and general public. In House Judiciary Committee.

Salary and Budget: Floor and Committee Activity

Arkansas HB 1353 ORIGINAL: Provides structure for the perpetual staffing and operation of the state's Automated Court Management System so that the system is self-supporting and all funding is generated by and through use of the system and without any use of general revenue funds. AMENDED: Replaces "designated state agency" with "Administrative Office of the Courts or the Information Network of Arkansas". Specifies distribution/recipients of court technology fee. Approved as amended by full House 2/12/09. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

Hawaii HB 298 Makes emergency appropriation to pay for statewide increases in electricity payments for fiscal year 2008-2009 for judiciary facilities. Approved as amended by House Judiciary Committee and sent to House Finance Committee 2/12/09.

Hawaii SB 110 Makes emergency appropriation to pay for statewide increases in electricity payments for fiscal year 2008-2009 for judiciary facilities. Approved as amended by Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee 2/5/09. In Senate Ways and Means Committee.

Indiana SB 535 Establishes the Indiana public retirement system to administer the judges' retirement fund and other specified public retirement systems. Approved as amended by Senate Committee on Pensions and Labor 2/12/09.

Maryland SB 307 Provides that the salary increase recommendations in the joint resolution of the Judicial Compensation Commission may not be deemed to have been made effective if the joint resolution is not passed by the General Assembly by the 50th day of the Session. Resets date commission meets, providing that the Commission shall now meet every 4 years, beginning on September 1, 2009. Approved by full Senate 2/10/09. In House Appropriations Committee.

Missouri HB 238 Allows the annual report of the Judicial Finance Commission to be combined with any other annual report of the Missouri Supreme Court or Office of State Courts Administrator under certain conditions. Approved by House Judiciary Committee 2/11/09.

Mississippi SB 2337 Allows the office allowances for circuit and chancery judges to be used for travel expenses for judicial education. Approved by full Senate 2/9/09.

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 Senate Public Affairs Committee and sent to Senate Judiciary Committee 2/10/09.

North Dakota HB 1446 AS AMENDED: Provides \$5,000,000 to the supreme court for the purpose of providing funding for county office building projects. Funds can only be allocated where there is demonstrated growth in caseload of at least one thousand five hundred cases when comparing the total annual caseload in 2007 to 2003 and a demonstrated space deficiency. Approved as amended by House Appropriations Committee 2/10/09.

Oklahoma SB 1059 Modifies employer contribution rates into the Uniform Retirement System for Justices and Judges and requires funds be transferred to the Judicial Retirement Fund. Approved as amended by Senate Appropriations Committee 2/12/09.

South Dakota HB 1066 With respect to the Commission on Judicial Qualifications, requires Supreme Court provide administrative support in managing the budget, in paying for travel expenses, in paying salaries of employees, and in drafting

contracts for services. Approved by Senate Judiciary Committee 2/10/09. Approved by full Senate 2/11/09.

Utah HB 297 Recodifies Budgetary Procedures Act. Requires an itemized estimate of the proposed appropriations for the Judicial Department as certified to the governor by the state court administrator. Specifies that the estimate for the Judicial Department, as certified by the state court administrator, shall be included in the governor's budget without revision, but the governor may make separate recommendations on the estimate. Approved as amended by House Government Operations Committee 2/10/09.

Virginia SB 1078 Provides that special justices, retired judges, or district court substitute judges presiding over involuntary commitment hearings shall receive a fee for each hearing that includes mileage, parking, tolls, and postage. Approved by full Senate 2/10/09.

Virginia SB 1387 Increases the fee on civil and criminal cases to be used for courthouse construction, renovation, or maintenance. Approved by full Senate as amended 2/9/09.

Virginia SB 923 Repeals the section granting mileage reimbursement for circuit judges to travel to and from the courthouse each day if they do not reside in the county seat. Approved by full Senate 2/9/09.

Wyoming HB 229 ORIGINAL: Creates high profile case contingency account to be administered by the supreme court. The state's court security committee is to provide grants to local courts using funds from the account. Appropriates \$100,000 into

account. AMENDED: Removes any reference to a court security committee and grants supreme court power to provide grants. Approved by full House 2/6/09.

Wyoming SB 140 Removes limits on the funding of individual drug courts. Approved by Senate Revenue Committee 2/5/09. Approved by full Senate 2/11/09.

Other: Newly Introduced

Maine SB 190 Requires claims of due process violations by state court judges be heard in federal courts of law. Directs the Attorney General to initiate a class action lawsuit against judges, and allow citizens of the State with claims of violations of constitutional rights by state court judges to join the class action lawsuit. Repeals state laws regulating the practice of law. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

Tennessee HB 259 and SB 69 Creates offense of a terroristic threat or act with the intent to retaliate against, among others, judges. Prefiled.

Tennessee HB 521 and SB 245 Allows judges to carry firearms where law enforcement can carry if they have permit or appropriate training. Prefiled.

Tennessee HB 676 and SB 647 Requires the administrative office of the courts to post signs in each courtroom in the state that details a "Litigant's Bill of Rights." Prefiled.

Tennessee HB 680 and SB 648 Permits any person to video record any public proceeding in a court of record. Requires juvenile courts to video and audio record court proceedings and to make those

recordings available to the parties for public proceedings or with permission of court. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 682](#) and [SB 1835](#) Requires the court of the judiciary to appoint a liaison to the general assembly to report on the activities of the court of the judiciary to the general assembly, the status of complaints, any remedial actions taken by the administrative office of the courts, and the training presented by the administrative office of the courts to judges, attorneys and litigants to provide a fair and impartial tribunal. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 724](#) and [SB 1129](#) Allows judges to carry firearms where law enforcement can carry if they have permit or appropriate training. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 855](#) and [SB 1275](#) Permits a judge or probation officer who holds a valid handgun carry permit to carry a handgun at any time and in any place in this state, notwithstanding current location restrictions. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 856](#) and [SB 1274](#) Permits a judge or probation officer with a handgun carry permit to carry a handgun at all times and in all places in the same manner as a law enforcement officer upon a showing that the permit holder is a judge or probation officer. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 1016](#) and [SB 374](#) Extends sunset date on judicial council to June 30, 2017. Prefiled.

Tennessee [HB 1102](#) and [SB 373](#) Extends sunset date for judicial council to June 30, 2010. Prefiled.

Tennessee [SB 1629](#) Requires administrative office of the courts to publish on its Web site all state appellate court decisions searchable by appellate and trial judges' names. Requires Web site to provide certain statistical information. Prefiled.

Tennessee [SB 1711](#) Adds former municipal court judges to eligibility list for judiciary registration plates. Prefiled.

Texas [HB 1118](#) Requires appointment of administrative judge for drug court programs by the governor with senate confirmation. Specifies powers/duties of administrative judge for drug court programs. In House (no committee).

Utah [HB 159](#) Establishes a legislative code of conduct and provides criminal penalties for its violation. Code includes following prohibition: "A legislator who is not a party or representing a party in a civil, criminal, or juvenile matter before a court of this state may not attempt to influence the outcome of a judicial controversy by communicating with a judge or justice concerning the matter." In House Ethics Committee.

West Virginia [HB 2075](#) Allows family court judges to carry concealed deadly weapons without obtaining a license. In House Judiciary Committee.

Other: Floor and Committee Activity

Arkansas [SB 303](#) Requires court security personnel complete additional training recommended by the Supreme Court Security and Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee and approved by the Arkansas Commission on Law Enforcement

Standards and Training. (Currently, training need only be approved by Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training). Approved by Senate Committee on Judiciary 2/11/09.

Mississippi SB 3081 Exempts all judges from state regulations regarding wireless communications devices assigned to state employees. Approved by full Senate 2/11/09.

New Mexico HJR 12 (Constitutional Amendment) Adds municipal judges to judicial standards commission. Approved by House Voters & Elections Committee and sent to House Judiciary Committee 2/12/09.

Utah SJR 6 ORIGINAL: Amends legislative rules to provide guidelines and restrictions for legislators when communicating with judges and others. Prohibits legislators from communicating with a judge in reference to a particular judicial case or proceeding until a final order has been made. Provides guidelines for communicating with the Administrative Office of the Courts or the clerk of the court in other circumstances. Provides guidelines for keeping records of communications with the judiciary. Provides exception to communications made in the ordinary course of a legislator's private employment, except where a legislator attempts to use his or her status as legislator to exert undue influence. AMENDED: Same, but prohibits communications with judges *if that communication will unduly influence the case or proceeding*. Approved as amended by Senate Government Operations and Political Subdivisions Committee 2/11/09.

Virginia HB 2526 Removes power to conduct judicial performance evaluation program from supreme court. Requires the Survey and Evaluation Research Laboratory of the Center for Public Policy at Virginia Commonwealth University to administer the program for the General Assembly and make annual reports to the Chairmen of the Committees for Courts of Justice of the House and Senate. Approved as amended by House Committee for Courts of Justice 2/6/09. Approved by full House 2/10/09. In Senate Committee for Courts of Justice.

Virginia SJR 360 ORIGINAL: Establishes a joint committee of the Senate Committee for Courts of Justice and the House Committee for Courts of Justice to study regular assignment of judicial personnel outside of established circuit boundaries. AMENDED: Joint Committee members need not be members of the Courts of Justice Committees. Approved as amended by Senate Committee on Rules 2/6/09. Approved by full Senate 2/10/09.

Wyoming HB 38 Requires all government entities, including courts, use the same fiscal year. Approved by full House as amended 2/3/09.

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