

Gavel to Gavel

A review of state legislation affecting the courts

February 5, 2010

Volume 4, Issue 6

Focus: Small Claims

Since the ongoing economic downturn, courts are finding their civil dockets flooded with cases involving debts and broken contracts. Perhaps it is this that has inspired the unprecedented level of interest in changing the small claims jurisdiction of state courts. What follows is the activity that occurred just in 2009 and so far in 2010. Of particular note is the spread of a concept, apparently [first implemented in Nebraska](#) in the mid 1980s, to automatically adjust the monetary limits based on inflation. Rhode Island and Virginia are considering such measures to move away from the need to rely on statutory changes in order to adjust small claims jurisdiction.

Law

[Maine HB 331](#) Increases from \$4,500 to \$10,000 small claims jurisdiction. Signed into law by Governor 6/17/09.

[New Hampshire HB 281](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction to \$7,500. Requires claims from \$5,000-\$7,500 be subject to mandatory mediation. Signed into law by Governor 6/9/09.

[North Dakota HB 1296](#) Increases from \$5,000 to \$10,000 small claims jurisdiction. Signed into law by Governor 4/8/09.

[Utah SB 176](#) Increases small claims court jurisdiction from \$7,500 to \$10,000. Signed into law by Governor 3/23/09.

Currently Active in 2010

[Georgia HB 976](#) Increases magistrate court jurisdiction from \$15,000 to \$25,000. In House Judiciary Committee.

[Hawaii HB 2784](#) & [SB 2465](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction from \$3,500 to \$7,000. House Judiciary Committee hearing set for 2/9/10. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Hawaii SB 359](#) Increases small claims court jurisdiction from \$3,500 to \$5,000. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Iowa HB 2002](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction from \$5,000 to \$10,000. In House Judiciary Committee.

[Iowa SB 2162](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction from \$5,000 to \$10,000. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Kentucky HB 103](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction from \$1,500 to \$2,500. In House Judiciary Committee.



ADVANCED GOVERNMENT SOLUTIONS
Intelligence Analysis Investigative Screening & Identity Verification Research Case Management Digital Asset Management

Legislative tracking provided by
LexisNexis

Research Division

NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS
300 Newport Avenue, Williamsburg, VA 23185
Phone (800) 616-6109 Fax (757) 564-2022

Editor's Email: wraftery@ncsc.org

Subscribe: gaveltogavel@ncsc.org

Blog: www.gaveltogavel.us

Online: http://www.ncsconline.org/D_Research/gaveltogavel/



[Kentucky HB 365](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction from \$1,500 to \$2,500. In House Judiciary Committee.

[Massachusetts HB 1317](#), [HB 1341](#), [HB 1648](#), [HB 1715](#), [HB 1761](#) & [HB 1762](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction from \$2,000 to \$5,000. In House (no committee).

[Minnesota HB 1181](#) Increases conciliation court jurisdiction from \$7,500 from \$15,000 or, if case involves consumer credit transaction, from \$4,000 from \$7,500. In House Civil Justice Committee.

[Minnesota SB 1627](#) Increases conciliation court jurisdiction from \$7,500 from \$15,000 or, if case involves consumer credit transaction, from \$4,000 from \$7,500. Approved by full Senate 4/21/09.

[Minnesota SB 1083](#) Increases conciliation court jurisdiction from \$7,500 from \$15,000 or, if case involves consumer credit transaction, from \$4,000 from \$7,500. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Mississippi HB 255](#) Increases Justice Court jurisdiction to \$10,000. In House Judiciary B Committee.

[Missouri HB 1255](#) Increases small claims court jurisdiction from \$3,000 to \$5,000. In House Small Business Committee.

[Nebraska LB 695](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction to \$5,000. Continues to authorize Supreme Court to adjust small claims limit in 2015 based on Consumer Price Index. Hearing held in House Judiciary Committee 1/21/10.

[New York AB 3876](#) & [AB 4070](#) Increases small claims court jurisdiction from \$3,000 to \$5,000 for justice courts. In Assembly Judiciary Committee.

[New York AB 7701](#) Increases small claims court jurisdiction from \$3,000 to \$6,000 In Assembly Judiciary Committee

[Oklahoma SB 814](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction from \$6,000 to \$25,000. In Senate Judiciary Committee

[Oklahoma SB 815](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction from \$6,000 to \$25,000. Approved by full Senate 3/3/09. Slightly different version approved by House 4/22/09. Conference committee could not reach agreement.

[Rhode Island HB 7042](#) Increases small claims court jurisdiction from \$2,500 to \$5,000. Allows for future increases based upon the Consumer Price Index. In House Judiciary Committee.

[South Carolina SB 200](#) Increases Magistrate Court's Jurisdiction from \$7,500 to \$10,000. Requires mandatory mediation in all cases equal to or above \$5,000 (except landlord/tenant) under procedures established by the South Carolina Supreme Court. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[South Carolina SB 285](#) Increases magistrate court's jurisdiction from \$7,500 to \$15,000. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Virginia SB 651](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Requires limit be adjusted July 1, 2015 and

every five years thereafter based on Consumer Price Index. In Senate Committee for Courts of Justice.

[Wisconsin AB 524](#) Increases small claims court jurisdiction from \$5,000 to \$10,000 if the claimant has commenced 20 or fewer such actions within the previous 365 days. Hearing held in Assembly Judiciary Committee 12/1/09.

Active in 2009 only

[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. No hearings.

[Kentucky HB 19](#) Raises small claims limits from \$1,500 to \$3,000. No hearings.

[Kentucky HB 243](#) Raises small claims limits from \$1,500 to \$3,000. No hearings.

[Mississippi HB 412](#) Increases justice court jurisdiction to \$10,000. No hearings.

[Mississippi HB 993](#) Increases to \$5,000. justice court jurisdiction. No hearings.

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

[West Virginia HB 2990](#) Increases magistrate court's jurisdiction from \$5,000 to \$10,000. No hearings.

Selection: Newly Introduced

[Alabama SB 330 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Enacts a statewide plan establishing judicial vacancy commissions for the filling of judicial office vacancies, except those judicial circuits having judicial vacancy commissions provided by local constitutional amendments to the Constitution. Provides if a local constitutional amendment creating a judicial vacancy commission is repealed, the county would be subject to the statewide judicial vacancy process in this amendment. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Arizona SCR 1049 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Provides Supreme Court to name presiding judge of Superior Court only in counties above 800,000 people (currently, Supreme Court names all presiding judges). Presiding judges in counties below 800,000 to be elected by county electors. Requires Superior Court judges be elected by county electors in counties over 800,000. Provides vacancies to be filled by County Board of Supervisors (currently Governor fills). Retains merit selection commission for appellate courts, but requires all applicants be submitted to governor in rank order based on merit. Provides appellate judges will remain subject to yes/no retention votes. Includes judicial races in state's public financing program. Sets spending limits for Superior Court candidates as equal to that for a candidate for the legislature and for presiding judge the same as Mine Inspector. Requires publicity pamphlet be created and distributed prior to elections and that all statements and comments filed with the secretary of state under 300 words be included. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Georgia HB 1057](#) Specifies it is the General Assembly that names and provides for the

compensation of the clerk of a magistrate's court unless a local law is put into effect. In House Committee on Judiciary.

[Illinois HCA 44 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Repeals provisions concerning the office of Associate Judge. Provides that Associate Judges in office on the effective date of the amendment assume the office of Circuit Judge on that date. Provides that Appellate and Circuit Judges are to be appointed by the Supreme Court based on nominations from Judicial Nominating Commissions. In House Rules Committee.

[Missouri HJR 91 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Imposes campaign contribution limits. For judicial candidates \$325, \$650 or \$1,275 (depending on size of district elected from). In House (no committee).

[Oklahoma SB 1909](#) Requires all vacancies in elected office be filled by election. In Senate Rules Committee.

[Tennessee SB 747 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Requires popular election of attorney general (currently selected by Supreme Court). In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Tennessee SB 747 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Requires popular election of attorney general (currently selected by Supreme Court). In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[West Virginia SB 399](#) Requires magistrates be elected in districts rather than countywide. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[West Virginia SB 402](#) Requires Supreme Court justices be elected by districts rather than statewide. In Senate Judiciary Committee

Selection: Floor and Committee Activity

[Hawaii SB 2156](#) Authorizes appointment of judge or justice as Administrative Director of the Courts, who retains salary and benefits of judicial position. Approved as amended by Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations 2/4/10.

[Indiana SB 36](#) Provides that magistrates who meet certain other criteria may be certified as special judges by the judicial nominating commission. Approved by full Senate 2/2/10.

[Utah SB 108](#) AS AMENDED: Requires governor create rules for procedure for judicial nominating commissions (currently, Chief Justice). Requires judicial nominating commissions to meet within 30 days from the effective date of a judicial vacancy. Allows the governor to appoint any person qualified under Article VIII, Section 7 of the Utah Constitution to fill a judicial vacancy if the judicial nominating commission fails to certify a list of nominees. Makes staff of Appellate Court Nominating Commission a member of the Governor's staff (currently, state court administrator is Commission secretary). Grants Governor power to name staff of Trial Court Nominating Commissions (currently, state court administrator). Requires Governor ensure Commission follows applicable rules and statutes (currently, job of Chief Justice). Approved as amended by Senate Judiciary,

Law Enforcement, and Criminal Justice Committee 1/29/10.

[Utah SB 109](#) AS AMENDED: Removes Supreme Court's power to name Chief Justice and grants it to the Governor. Extends Chief Justice's term to six years (note: does NOT extend term as Justice of the Supreme Court) and prohibits Chief Justice from serving successive terms. Permits Supreme Court to name Associate Chief Justice only and extends term to three years. Approved as amended by Senate Judiciary, Law Enforcement, and Criminal Justice Committee 2/5/10.

[Washington HB 1738](#) Declares an intent to protect the fairness of elections for the Supreme Court. Declares that the act is necessary to ensure that our highest courts continue to be unbiased and insulated from special interests. Establishes the judicial election reform act to introduce a voluntary pilot project to provide an alternative source of financing candidates for the Washington Supreme Court who demonstrate public support and voluntarily accept strict fundraising and spending limits. Prohibits the public disclosure commission from offering the public financing program until an appropriation of three million dollars is made for the program. Creates the judicial election reform act fund. Approved as substituted by House Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs 2/2/10. In House Ways & Means Committee.

[Washington SB 6686](#) Requires the mayor of each city or town, within 30 days after the effective date of the ordinance creating the municipal court, appoint a municipal judge or judges subject to confirmation by the

local legislative authority to serve until January 1 of the year following the next election. Requires local legislative authority set by ordinance how many municipal judges to be elected are specifically full and part time. Specifies municipalities have the authority to contract with other municipalities or district courts to provide judicial services. Approved as amended by Senate Committee on Judiciary 2/5/10.

Qualifications and Terms: Newly Introduced

[Arizona SCR 1040 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Increases mandatory retirement age for judges from 70 to 75. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Maryland HB 417 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Requires judges of the Orphans' Courts *in the city of Baltimore only* be attorneys. In House Judiciary Committee.

[West Virginia HB 4292](#) Requires any person who begins serving as a magistrate after the effective date of this legislation to possess an associate degree from an accredited college or have two years of experience as a magistrate. Requires all magistrates attend an annual training conference by the Administrator of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia. Removes distinction between those magistrates who serve 5,000 or less in population and those who serve more than 5,000. In House Judiciary Committee.

Qualifications and Terms: Floor and Committee Activity

[Georgia HB 478](#) Requires municipal court judges be attorneys unless already serving as municipal court judge. Approved by House Committee on Governmental Affairs 2/4/10.

[New Hampshire HB 1185](#) Clarifies that retired judges over 70 years of age shall not serve as judges in any judicial capacity except as judicial referees. Approved by House Judiciary Committee 2/3/10.

[Virginia SB 206](#) Adjusts the mandatory retirement age under judicial retirement for judges, justices and members of the State Corporation Commission from 70 to 73. Approved by Senate Finance Committee 2/2/10.

Rule Making Authority: Newly Introduced

[Connecticut SB 30](#) Places legislature and judicial branches under State Library Board record management program. Prohibits courts and others from refusing to provide documents under the Freedom of Information Act without giving a specific denial of the request and not a general statement of public agency policy against disclosure of such documents. In Joint Committee on Government Administration and Elections.

[Florida HB 891](#) Authorizes chief judge to designate court administrator to perform duties relating to jury system management & operation. In House (no committee).

[Maryland SB 398](#) Provides that the date for trial of a criminal matter in the circuit court shall be set by the county administrative

judge or a designee of the judge. Authorizes a county administrative judge to delegate to any judge, committee of judges, or officer or employee of the Judicial Branch of State government any of the administrative responsibilities, duties, and functions of the county administrative judge. In Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee.

[Tennessee HB 2983](#) Requires court of the judiciary to deliberate in public. In House Judiciary Committee.

[Tennessee SB 2905](#) Requires court of the judiciary to deliberate in public. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[West Virginia HB 4278](#) Allows the Supreme Court of Appeals to establish a uniform bail schedule. In House Judiciary Committee.

Rule Making Authority: Floor and Committee Activity

[Georgia HB 185](#) Authorizes Chief Justice to extend the duration of a judicial emergency order when a public health emergency exists until the emergency ends (currently a maximum of 60 days). Approved by Senate Committee on Judiciary 2/5/10.

[New Hampshire SB 356](#) Requires writs and processes in civil actions to be in the form provided in rules adopted by the Supreme Court. Approved by Senate Judiciary Committee 2/3/10.

[Virginia HB 883](#) Sets out a procedure for the Supreme Court to follow in entering an order declaring a judicial emergency when there is a disaster as defined in the Commonwealth's Emergency Services and

Disaster Law. Permits the judicial emergency order to suspend, toll, extend, or otherwise grant relief from time limits or filing requirements in any court affected by the order and allows designation of a neighboring jurisdiction as proper venue for civil and criminal proceedings. Approved by full House 2/2/10.

Structure Changes: Newly Introduced

[Florida SB 1570](#) Provides for implementing a unified family court program in the circuit courts. In Senate (no committee).

[Kansas SB 481](#) Permits district magistrate judges to serve multiple counties. Removes requirement each county have at least one district magistrate judge. In Senate Ways and Means Committee.

[New Mexico HB 229](#) Requires creation of "metropolitan courts" in counties with a population of more than 350,000 (currently 200,000). In House Judiciary Committee.

[Oklahoma SB 2513](#) Permits any district or municipal court establish a mental health court. In Senate Appropriations Committee.

[Tennessee SB 3181](#) Extends the sunset date for the Tennessee court of the judiciary until June 30, 2011. In Senate Government Operations Committee.

[Tennessee HB 3291](#) Extends the sunset date for the Tennessee court of the judiciary until June 30, 2011. In Senate Government Operations Committee.

Structure Changes: Floor and Committee Activity

[Florida HB 47](#) 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 by Civil Justice & Courts Policy Committee 1/12/10.

[Hawaii HB 1942](#) Establishes a temporary Hawaii Veterans Court within the Judiciary to help address prison overcrowding. Approved as amended by House Committee on Economic Revitalization, Business & Military Affairs 2/4/10.

[Mississippi SB 2343](#) Requires municipalities with at least 20,000 people (currently 10,000) appoint a municipal judge. Approved by full Senate 2/3/10.

[Indiana HB 1271](#) Provides that certain courts may establish a problem solving court for alternative treatment and rehabilitation. Requires the board of directors of the judicial center to adopt rules for the certification and operation of problem solving courts. Approved by full House 2/2/10.

[Virginia HB 663](#) Allows the establishment of servicemembers and veterans courts as specialized court dockets within the existing structure of Virginia's court system. Creates state military members and veterans court advisory committee. Grants Supreme Court of Virginia administrative oversight for the implementation of the Act. Stricken from docket by House Committee for Courts of Justice 2/1/10.

[Wisconsin SB 383](#) Restructures state's municipal court system. Specifies municipal court judges are subject to the authority of the supreme court. Requires local ordinances subject to municipal judges be certified by the chief judge. Requires municipal court budget line items be separate from all others. Grants municipal courts statewide jurisdiction. Specifies requirements of service, including wearing of a black robe during proceedings. Approved by full House 1/28/10.

Jurisdiction: Newly Introduced

[Arizona SB 1396](#) Prohibits any judicial determination citing or based on foreign law or decisions of international or U.N. courts. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Iowa SB 2162](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction from \$5,000 to \$10,000. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Kentucky HB 365](#) Increases small claims jurisdiction from \$1,500 to \$2,500. In House (no committee).

[Maryland HB 434 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Increasing minimum amount of civil suit entitled to jury trial from \$10,000 to \$20,000. In House Judiciary Committee.

[Maryland HB 436](#) Increasing minimum amount of civil suit entitled to jury trial from \$10,000 to \$20,000. In House Judiciary Committee.

Jurisdiction: Floor and Committee Activity

[Indiana HB 1186](#) Allows a city or town that has not established a city or town court or an ordinance violations bureau to enter into an interlocal agreement with a city, town, or other municipal corporation that has established: (1) a city or town court; or (2) an ordinance violations bureau; to hear and dispose of ordinance violations that would otherwise come under the jurisdiction of a city or town court or an ordinance violations bureau established by the city or town. Approved by full House 1/25/10.

Salary and Budget: Newly Introduced

[Maryland HJR 4](#) Sets judicial salaries for 2011-2013. In House Appropriations Committee.

[Maryland SJR 4](#) Sets judicial salaries for 2011-2013. In Senate Budget and Taxation Committee.

[Missouri HJR 82 \(Constitutional Amendment\)](#) Requires Citizens' Commission on Compensation for Elected Officials to file a schedule of compensation for all elected state officials and judges, except municipal judges, and a separate schedule for all members of the General Assembly. In House (no committee).

[Missouri SB 880](#) Creates a surcharge of \$100 to be collected by the clerks of the circuit courts in all cases where the defendant pleads guilty to or is found guilty of an intoxication-related traffic offense. Provides money shall be deposited into the expanded "Drug and DWI Court Resource Fund" to be used only to support the

operation of DWI dockets or courts established under the drug court program. In Senate Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.

[Oklahoma SB 2087](#) Eliminates procedure linking salaries of other state officers/elected officials to judicial salaries In Senate Appropriations Committee.

Salary and Budget: Floor and Committee Activity

[Georgia HB 54](#) Alters various provisions relating to survivors' benefits under the Georgia Judicial Retirement System. Approved by full House 2/4/10.

[Hawaii SB 2155](#) Authorizes the judiciary to pay a service fee to an electronic payment service provider and to pass the fee on to the customer. Approved by Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations 2/4/10.

[Indiana SB 298](#) Consolidates judges' retirement fund and 9 other retirement funds into a new Indiana Public Retirement System. Approved as amended by full Senate 2/2/10.

[Kansas HB 2476](#) Extends various fees set to expire in 2010 to 2011. Approved as amended by full House 2/4/10. In Senate Committee on Judiciary.

[Kentucky SB 40](#) Requires Chief Justice establish website detailing all judicial expenditures by object and vendor, amount, and purpose. Requires site provide electronic link to documents relating to the

expenditure. Approved by full House 2/2/10.

[Kentucky SB 87](#) Requires supplemental court fees imposed by counties to support courthouse operation and construction be subject to an annual public accounting of the disposition of the funds collected. Approved by full Senate 2/2/10.

[New Mexico SB 226](#) Creates magistrate courts operations fund in the state treasury for appropriation by the legislature for the operations of magistrate and metropolitan courts. Creates temporary new magistrate court operations fee of \$4.00, to be credited to the magistrate courts operations fund. Specifies other fees to go towards magistrate courts operations fund. Requires any balances in the fund at the end of FY2014 revert to the General Fund. Approved by Senate Committee on Committees 2/1/10. Approved by Senate Judiciary Committee 2/5/10.

[South Dakota HB 1081](#) Increases unified judicial system court automation surcharge for various filings and fines. Approved as amended by House Judiciary Committee 2/1/10.

[Virginia SB 258](#) Creates a local fee retention funding method for circuit court clerks' offices in which the clerk retains fees locally and pays 20 percent of gross fees to the state to be held by the Compensation Board in a trust fund beginning July 1, 2012. Requires trust fund be used to fund those offices that did not receive enough revenue in fees to maintain operations. Gives the clerk discretion in docketing judgments in favor of the Commonwealth, and removes the

prohibition against charging fees for certain orders, entries, and documents. Approved as substituted by Senate Committee for Courts of Justice 2/3/10.

[Washington SB 6503](#) ORIGINAL: Requires state agencies of the legislative and executive branches only to achieve a reduction in employee compensation cost, submit to the office of financial management a compensation reduction plan to achieve the cost reductions. Requires an agency or institution, which does not have an approved plan by June 1, 2010, to close once per month on specified dates. AMENDED: Same, but applies requirements to courts. Approved as substituted by full Senate 1/22/10. Approved by House Committee on Ways & Means 2/1/10.

Other: Newly Introduced

[California AB 1697](#) Requires any person providing superior court law enforcement functions, as defined, shall be in the employ and under the direction of the county sheriff. Requires that the cost of services specified in the memorandum of understanding shall be based on the actual county-by-county allocation for an unspecified fiscal year, as determined by the working group on court security established pursuant to the Superior Court Law Enforcement Act. Continues increased court security fee until July 1, 2016. Requires the Administrative Office of the Courts adjust the court security fee annually and publish the current dollar amount of the court security fee on its Internet Web site. Requires proceeds of the court security fee to be deposited in a separate account of the Trial Court Trust Fund for the sole purpose of funding sheriffs

and marshals for superior court security. In Assembly (no committee).

[New Mexico HJM 42](#) Requests AOC convene a task force and conduct a study to identify ways to increase efficiency and reduce the burden on county detention facilities of housing arrestees held on felony charges or for violations of parole and probation. Requires study also consider ways to expedite the judgment and sentencing process, reduce the transfer time of arrestees to prison, expedite the scheduling of probation revocation hearings and identify best practices that maximize the most efficient and effective length of stay for arrestees according to the law. In House Judiciary Committee.

[Oklahoma SB 2170](#) Creates Task Force on Standardization of Courtroom Security Procedures. Task Force to be made up of legislators, only. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Tennessee HB 3054](#) Requires courtroom security committee of each county to establish guidelines by October 1, 2010, for allowing guide dogs and other service dogs into courtrooms in that county. In House Judiciary Committee.

[Tennessee SB 3178](#) Requires the judicial council to meet at least twice each year while the legislature is in session. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Tennessee SB 3179](#) Requires judicial council, upon request or on own motion, to send suggestions for statutory changes pertaining to the judicial system to the legislature. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[Tennessee SB 3775](#) Requires courtroom security committee of each county to establish guidelines by October 1, 2010, for allowing guide dogs and other service dogs into courtrooms in that county. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

[West Virginia SB 428](#) Allows magistrates to carry concealed deadly weapons without obtaining a license. In Senate Judiciary Committee.

Other: Floor and Committee Activity

[New Hampshire SB 330](#) Reinstates the court accreditation commission to prescribe minimum standards for all courts with respect to size, adequacy of facilities, security, decor and design, judicial chambers, conference rooms, stenographic and clerical assistance, decorum, parking facilities, respect for the rights of the public, law enforcement personnel, and the accused, and such other features as the supreme court shall direct. Expands membership of commission. Approved by full Senate 2/3/10.

[Virginia SB 220](#) Establishes electronic filing of cases in circuit courts by providing for acceptance of electronic images as original

documents for filing and recording, and for the attachment of electronic seals or stamps for original signatures and notarizations in civil cases. Exempts from e-filing program cases where particular forms are specified by statute. Approved by Senate Finance Committee 2/2/10.