

2. *Duties and Powers.* After appointments, the committee will compile and submit a work plan and budget to the Legislative Council for approval. The committee's objective will be to:

- a. Examine state laws and regulations governing the judicial system;
- b. Evaluate the effectiveness of the judiciary system;
- c. Provide recommendations to the legislature regarding new legislation or changes in current law, if any, determined necessary by the committee.

3. *Report.* The committee will compile a report of its findings and recommendations for the consideration of the first session of the forty-sixth legislature.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$50.0 contained in this bill is a non-recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2003 shall revert to the general fund.

The amount is to be used for the purpose of paying the salaries and expenses of the technical, legal and clerical staff and for reimbursing the per diem and mileage expenses of the state judicial system study committee members.

CONFLICT/DUPLICATION/COMPANIONSHIP/RELATIONSHIP

There were numerous bills introduced this session on behalf of the judiciary totaling millions of dollars. Some of the requests were consistent with and approved by the Judiciary Unified Budget. Others introduced were in direct conflict with the unified budget and the Chief Judges Council. Issues regarding elections of judges arose. Bills requesting judgeships for certain districts conflicted with other bills and, sometimes, even with the recipient of the legislation. Questions have been posed this year regarding elimination of certain magistrate districts; one bill proposed consolidating municipal and magistrate courts in one locale. A 14th judicial district has been proposed. Residency requirements of another district have been amended. The Weighted Workload Study has been used to request additional positions but also used to eliminate certain positions. Magistrates want to change the salary formula; court fees have been increased. Redistricting may be addressed..... It appears that many issues face the judiciary today.

A cooperative, comprehensive study as proposed in this bill may assist in prioritizing the issues and in recommending a methodology for accomplishing certain goals.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Is \$50.0 enough to pay for technical, legal and clerical staff until December 2002?
2. In evaluating "effectiveness of the judiciary," what criteria will be used? Is this a performance evaluation, such as timeliness of case filing to adjudication? or an efficiency evaluation such as caseload per judge?

CMH/njw:ar