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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: SFC DATE TYPED: 02/28/03 HB _____

SHORT TITLE: Increase Judgeships in Certain Judicial Districts SB 906/SFCS

ANALYST: Hayes

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY03	FY04	FY03	FY04		
	-0-				

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to SB 39, SB 143 and SB 176

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 906 amends Section 34-6-6 NMSA 1978 to increase the number of judgeships in the Third Judicial District Court from six to seven.

Senate Bill 906 also amends Section 34-6-9 NMSA 1978 to increase the number of judgeships in the Sixth Judicial District Court from two to three. The judge of division 1 shall reside and maintain his principal office in Grant county.

A temporary provision is included in the bill which states that the two judgeships created by this legislation shall be filled by appointment by the governor pursuant to the provisions of Article 6 of the constitution of New Mexico.

Significant Issues

1. In 1998, the AOC completed an updated and expanded study to provide the Legislature with a methodology for determining the needs for additional judgeships, the Weighted Caseload Study. The study assigns a weight for each type of case. The weight, ex-

pressed in minutes, represents the average amount of judge's time necessary to process a case of that type. Each weight is then multiplied by the number of new cases filed per category. Although some judges question this methodology, it is the accepted formula of the Chief Judges Council in determining judgeship needs.

2. The Chief Judges Council reviewed the Weighted Caseload Study and voted to support one judgeship requested for the Third Judicial District Court and one judgeship for the Sixth Judicial District Court as highlighted in the *Judiciary Unified Budget* document.

RELATIONSHIP

HB 52 requests a salary increase for all state judges in New Mexico beginning July 1, 2003.

SB 39 requests an additional judgeship for the Third Judicial District Court.

SB 143, the "judgeship bill," addresses the needs for judgeship in district, metropolitan and magistrate courts.

SB 176 requests an additional judgeship for the Sixth Judicial District Court.

CMH/yr