

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 2721

C 244 L 00

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to venue of actions by or against counties.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Representatives Morris, Schoesler, Grant, Mastin, Quall, Dunn and Anderson).

House Committee on Judiciary
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Background:

Venue refers to the county within the state where a lawsuit may be brought or heard. The venue for a party suing a county is in the superior court of that county or the superior court of either of the two nearest counties. Counties have the option to sue in the defendant's home county or in either of the two counties nearest the county initiating the action.

"The nearest county" is measured by travel time between county seats using major surface routes as determined by the Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC). The OAC uses data from the Department of Transportation to determine the travel time between county seats using highways and car ferries.

Some superior court districts contain two or more counties, and, therefore, the counties share one judge. In some counties, one of the two nearest county seats is in the same court district, providing only one alternative venue outside the district.

Summary of Bill:

The superior court venues available for an action involving a county as a party are changed from "the two nearest counties" to "the two nearest judicial districts."

Votes on Final Passage:

House 97 0
Senate 45 0

Effective: June 8, 2000