

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6887

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Ways & Means, February 7, 2006

Title: An act relating to juror compensation at the superior court level.

Brief Description: Adding provisions regarding superior court juror fees.

Sponsors: Senators Kline, Schoesler, Doumit, Brandland and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 2/7/06 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair, Capital Budget Chair; Doumit, Vice Chair, Operating Budget; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Fairley, Kohl-Welles, Parlette, Pridemore, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Thibaudeau.

Staff: Paula Faas (786-7449)

Background: Under statute, the minimum daily pay rate for jurors is \$10 per day, with a maximum of \$25 per day. This rate of pay applies to all forms of juries, including trial juries in district and superior courts, grand juries called by prosecutors, and inquiry juries called by coroners. Local jurisdictions bear the cost of paying jurors, except that in superior court cases involving incidents within correctional institutions, the state reimburses the county for jurors' fees. Jurors also receive reimbursement for mileage at the rate set for state officials and employees by the director of the Office of Financial Management.

Additionally, as directed by statute, the state pays all benefits and one-half of the salary of a superior court judge. The other half of the judge's salary and all other costs associated with a judicial position, such as capital and support staff costs, are paid by the county.

Summary of Bill: When funding is appropriated, for Superior Court juror compensation only, the minimum amount of daily juror compensation is raised to \$20, and the maximum amount is raised to \$40. At minimum, counties will provide \$10 and the state will provide \$10. Additionally, if counties decide to increase their share of the jury fee above \$10, the state will match the increase dollar-for-dollar up to an additional \$10 from the state.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 6, 2006.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: In several areas of the state, the cost just to buy lunch and pay for parking and transportation are greater than the daily reimbursement provided to jurors. This bill will address that.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Senator Kline, Prime Sponsor.