

MINUTES
SENATE AND HOUSE COMMITTEES ON JUDICIARY
Meeting Jointly
Monday, September 9, 2024
10:00 AM
Room A, MAC
Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Gary Stubblefield, Chair; Alan Clark, and Matt McKee; Representatives Carol Dalby, Chair; Stan Berry, Vice-Chair; Andrew Collins, Cameron Cooper, Jimmy Gazaway, Ashley Hudson, Tippi McCullough, Jeremiah Moore, Milton Nicks, Jr., Shad Pearce, Marcus E. Richmond, Jamie Scott, Kendon Underwood, and Steve Unger

Other members present: Senators Justin Boyd, Jonathan Dismang, Jim Dotson, Bart Hester, Mark Johnson, and Fredrick Love; Representatives Fred Allen, Denise Ennett, Jon Eubanks, Brian Evans, Kenneth Ferguson, Steve Hollowell, Austin McCollum, Aaron Pilkington, Joy Springer, Dwight Tosh, Jeff Wardlaw, and Jeremy Wooldridge

Representative Dalby called the meeting to order.

Consideration to Approve the August 1, 2024, Meeting Minutes [Exhibit C]

Senator McKee made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Representative S. Berry and the motion carried.

Discussion and Adoption of Recommendations for the Legislative Study of Financial Matters Related to the Court System as Required by Act 38 of 2023 [Exhibits D1-D6]

Ben Barham, Staff Attorney, Administrative Office of the Courts; Mark Whitmore, Chief Legal Counsel, Association of Arkansas Counties (AAC), ; and Taylor Handford, Legal Counsel, AAC; provided insight on the recommendation to eliminate the cost-sharing requirement of state district judge salaries with cities and counties. Representative Richmond moved to include this recommendation in the draft final report, seconded by Representative Nicks, Jr, and the motion carried.

Representative Cooper moved to include the recommendation, eliminate the \$10.00 installment fee in District Courts, in the draft final report, seconded by Representative Collins, and the motion carried.

Blake Gary, Legal Counsel, Arkansas Municipal League; provided clarification on the proposed recommendation to recalculate the “retained share” of uniform filing fees and court cost from the current fixed amount to a 50/50 split between City Administration of Justice Funds or County Administration of Justice Funds and the State Administration of Justice Fund. Representative Richmond moved to include the recommendation in the draft final report, seconded by Representative Scott, and the motion carried.

Representative Gazaway moved to include the recommendation to conduct a study of the State Administration of Justice Fund in the draft final report, seconded by Senator Stubblefield, and the motion carried.

Representative Gazaway moved to include the recommendation that committees recognize that the District Court Resources Assessment Board (DCRAB) should consider items of importance that the General Assembly will look to DCRAB for possible solutions as it relates the financial matters related to the court system in the

draft final report, seconded by Representative Richmond and the motion carried.

Representative Scott moved to include the recommendation that the judicial branch is encouraged to develop a web-based application that automatically notifies individuals, via text-message or other automated electronic notification, when they have an upcoming court appearance, in an effort to reduce the number of failures to appear in the state in the draft final report, seconded by Representative Nicks, Jr, and the motion carried.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

DRAFT