

Committee on Regulated Industries

CS/HB 7095 — Clerks of Court

by Appropriations Committee; Judiciary Committee; and Rep. Snyder (CS/CS/SB 1166 by Judiciary Committee; Regulated Industries Committee, and Senator Simmons)

The bill amends current law relating to the responsibilities of the clerks of the court to enhance the collection of court fees and fines and to improve the efficiency of their operations. The bill requires a broader use of the Comprehensive Case Information System (CCIS) among state agencies to reduce operational costs and duties of the clerks of the court.

The bill:

- Makes discretionary the clerk's review of property and motor vehicle records of persons seeking an indigency determination for purposes of obtaining a public defender.
- Provides that filing fees are due when a party files a pleading to initiate a proceeding.
- Provides that fees are due upon filing a pleading to reopen a case that has been closed at least 90 days.
- Requires clerks to collect a \$10 service charge for issuing a certified copy or an electronic certified copy of a summons rather than only for an original summons.
- Updates jury legislation to reflect modern practices and current procedures.
- Allows an action for the collection of court costs and fines to be brought at any time.
- Requires the state attorney to notify the clerk of the court when a defendant is a public officer charged with a specified offense before the clerk is required to send notice of the proceedings to the Commission on Ethics.
- Ranks claims for the collection of unpaid fees, court costs, and fines at level three for payment of claims against a decedent's estate by a personal representative.
- Removes the requirement for clerks of the court to send certified copies of felony drug convictions to agencies issuing business or professional licenses, and replaces it with a requirement for the licensing agency to obtain such information from the CCIS.
- Provides that, with respect to criminal financial obligations, a previously imposed criminal or civil judgment constitutes a civil lien against the judgment debtor's real or personal property when recorded as required by s. 55.10, F.S. The bill exempts such liens from the current 10 year re-recording requirement of the statute.
- Adds the payment of fines, fees, and other court related costs as a condition of parole in addition to the current condition of paying restitution.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2012.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 111-0