

Committee on Judiciary

CS/HB 7081 — State Court System Administration

by Judiciary Committee; Civil Justice Subcommittee; and Rep. DiCeglie (CS/CS/SB 656 by Appropriations Committee; Judiciary Committee; and Senator Baxley)

The bill amends several statutes relating to the administration of the state court system. The bill addresses foreign language court interpreters and mediators, parenting coordination, judicial retirements, and electronic records and fingerprinting.

Foreign Language Court Interpreters and Mediators

The bill provides the Office of the State Courts Administrator with statutory authority to conduct national background screenings for court-appointed foreign language court interpreters and mediators. This statutory change is needed to comply with requirements established by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Parenting Coordination

The bill permits confidential communications between parties and the parenting coordinator, that are otherwise confidential, to be used as testimony and evidence in professional misconduct or professional malpractice cases against a coordinator. Members of the Parenting Coordinator Review Board and any other person who is appointed or employed by the Supreme Court to assist in a parenting coordinator disciplinary proceeding, such as a prosecutor or investigator, is given civil immunity for actions associated with disciplinary proceedings.

Judicial Retirements

The bill amends provisions relating to the Florida Retirement System to clarify that only a justice or a judge who reaches age 70 before July 1, 2019, is authorized to purchase service credit relating to either temporary duty as a senior judge after that date or the remainder of the justice or judge's term of office.

Electronic Judgments and Fingerprinting

The bill permits, but does not require, the courts to implement the use of electronic judgments and electronic fingerprinting in certain criminal cases. The bill requires that an electronic record of a judgment of guilty include a certification by the judge that the fingerprints belong to the defendant and that the certification, in a written or electronic record, of a guilty judgment is admissible as prima facie evidence that the fingerprints on the judgment are those of the defendant.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2019.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 110-0