

Committee on Judiciary

CS/SB 538 — State Courts System

by Appropriations Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice and Senator Bradley

This bill amends several statutes addressing different aspects of the state courts system. These amendments:

- Allow a circuit court duty judge, which is a judge who is responsible for handling urgent matters outside of regular court hours, to hold and conduct hearings in places other than his or her chambers.
- Require each judicial circuit to have a judge available at all times to conduct hearings.
- Repeal the \$1,500 per day limit on fees paid to a court-appointed arbitrator.
- Allow a judge to authenticate documents containing written statements under oath made by others without using a personal or court seal.
- Allow the clerks to request specified reimbursements through the Justice Administrative Commission (JAC) rather than through the Office of the State Courts Administrator (OSCA).

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2025.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 115-0