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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

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Appropriations Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice  
(Steube) recommended the following:

**Senate Amendment (with title amendment)**

Delete everything after the enacting clause  
and insert:

Section 1. Section 25.025, Florida Statutes, is created to  
read:

25.025 Headquarters.—

(1) (a) A Supreme Court justice who permanently resides  
outside Leon County shall, if he or she so requests, have a  
district court of appeal courthouse, a county courthouse, or



343172

11 other appropriate facility in his or her district of residence  
12 designated as his or her official headquarters pursuant to s.  
13 112.061. This official headquarters may serve only as the  
14 justice's private chambers.

15 (b) A justice for whom an official headquarters is  
16 designated in his or her district of residence under this  
17 subsection is eligible for subsistence at a rate to be  
18 established by the Chief Justice for each day or partial day  
19 that the justice is at the headquarters of the Supreme Court for  
20 the conduct of the business of the court. In addition to the  
21 subsistence allowance, a justice is eligible for reimbursement  
22 for transportation expenses as provided in s. 112.061(7) for  
23 travel between the justice's official headquarters and the  
24 headquarters of the Supreme Court for the conduct of the  
25 business of the court.

26 (c) Payment of subsistence and reimbursement for  
27 transportation expenses relating to travel between a justice's  
28 official headquarters and the headquarters of the Supreme Court  
29 shall be made to the extent appropriated funds are available, as  
30 determined by the Chief Justice.

31 (2) The Chief Justice shall coordinate with each affected  
32 justice and other state and local officials as necessary to  
33 implement paragraph (1) (a).

34 (3) (a) This section does not require a county to provide  
35 space in a county courthouse for a justice. A county may enter  
36 into an agreement with the Supreme Court governing the use of  
37 space in a county courthouse.

38 (b) The Supreme Court may not use state funds to lease  
39 space in a district court of appeal courthouse, county



343172

40 courthouse, or other facility to allow a justice to establish an  
41 official headquarters pursuant to subsection (1).

42 Section 2. Subsection (9) of section 26.031, Florida  
43 Statutes, is amended to read:

44 26.031 Judicial circuits; number of judges.—The number of  
45 circuit judges in each circuit shall be as follows:

JUDICIAL CIRCUIT	TOTAL
(9) Ninth.....	45 43

49 Section 3. Section 34.01, Florida Statutes, is amended to  
50 read:

51 34.01 Jurisdiction of county court.—

52 (1) County courts shall have original jurisdiction:

53 (a) In all misdemeanor cases not cognizable by the circuit  
54 courts.~~†~~

55 (b) Of all violations of municipal and county ordinances.~~†~~

56 (c) 1. Of all actions at law filed on or before December 31,  
57 2019, in which the matter in controversy does not exceed the sum  
58 of \$15,000, exclusive of interest, costs, and attorney  
59 attorney's fees, except those within the exclusive jurisdiction  
60 of the circuit courts.~~†~~ and

61 2. Of all actions at law filed on or after January 1, 2020,  
62 in which the matter in controversy does not exceed the sum of  
63 \$50,000, exclusive of interest, costs, and attorney fees, except  
64 those within the exclusive jurisdiction of the circuit courts.  
65 This limit must be adjusted every 5 years after January 1, 2020,  
66 to reflect the rate of inflation or deflation as indicated in  
67 the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, U.S. City  
68 Average, All Items, or successor reports as reported by the



343172

69 United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics,  
70 or its successor. Such adjustments must be rounded to the  
71 nearest \$5,000.

72 (d) Of disputes occurring in the homeowners' associations  
73 as described in s. 720.311(2)(a), which shall be concurrent with  
74 jurisdiction of the circuit courts.

75  
76 The party instituting an action at law under subparagraph (c)2.  
77 in which the amount in controversy exceeds \$15,000 shall pay the  
78 filing fees and service charges in the same amounts and in the  
79 same manner as provided in s. 28.241, and the party appealing  
80 any judgment on such action shall pay the filing fees and  
81 service charges in the same amounts and in the same manner as  
82 provided in s. 35.22. The clerk of court shall remit the fees as  
83 provided in those sections.

84 (2) The county courts shall have jurisdiction previously  
85 exercised by county judges' courts other than that vested in the  
86 circuit court by s. 26.012, except that county court judges may  
87 hear matters involving dissolution of marriage under the  
88 simplified dissolution procedure pursuant to the Florida Family  
89 Law Rules of Procedure or may issue a final order for  
90 dissolution in cases where the matter is uncontested, and the  
91 jurisdiction previously exercised by county courts, the claims  
92 court, small claims courts, small claims magistrates courts,  
93 magistrates courts, justice of the peace courts, municipal  
94 courts, and courts of chartered counties, including but not  
95 limited to the counties referred to in ss. 9, 10, 11, and 24,  
96 Art. VIII of the State Constitution of 1885, as preserved by s.  
97 (6)(e), Art. VIII of the State Constitution of 1968.



343172

98 (3) Judges of county courts shall also be committing trial  
99 court judges. Judges of county courts shall be coroners unless  
100 otherwise provided by law or by rule of the Supreme Court.

101 (4) Judges of county courts may hear all matters in equity  
102 involved in any case within the jurisdictional amount of the  
103 county court, except as otherwise restricted by the State  
104 Constitution or the laws of Florida.

105 (5) A county court is a trial court.

106 Section 4. Subsections (9), (12), (17), and (28) of section  
107 34.022, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

108 34.022 Number of county court judges for each county.—The  
109 number of county court judges in each county shall be as  
110 follows:

112 COUNTY	TOTAL
113 (9) Citrus.....	<u>2</u> ±
114 (12) Columbia.....	<u>2</u> ±
115 (17) Flagler.....	<u>2</u> ±
116 (28) Hillsborough.....	<u>19</u> ±7

117 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.

118  
119 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

120 And the title is amended as follows:

121 Delete everything before the enacting clause  
122 and insert:

123 A bill to be entitled  
124 An act relating to courts; creating s. 25.025, F.S.;  
125 authorizing certain Supreme Court Justices to have an  
126 appropriate facility in their district of residence



343172

127 designated as their official headquarters; providing  
128 that an official headquarters may serve only as a  
129 justice's private chambers; providing that such  
130 justices are eligible for a certain subsistence  
131 allowance and reimbursement for certain transportation  
132 expenses; requiring that such allowance and  
133 reimbursement be made to the extent appropriated funds  
134 are available, as determined by the Chief Justice;  
135 requiring the Chief Justice to coordinate with certain  
136 persons in implementing designations of official  
137 headquarters; providing that a county is not required  
138 to provide space for a justice in a county courthouse;  
139 authorizing counties to enter into agreements with the  
140 Supreme Court for the use of county courthouse space;  
141 prohibiting the Supreme Court from using state funds  
142 to lease space in a facility to allow a justice to  
143 establish an official headquarters; amending s.  
144 26.031, F.S.; adding judges to the Ninth Judicial  
145 Circuit Court; amending s. 34.01, F.S.; increasing the  
146 limit of the amount in controversy in certain actions  
147 at law under which the county court has original  
148 jurisdiction of such actions; providing for  
149 adjustments to the limit at specified intervals due to  
150 inflation or deflation; specifying filing fees,  
151 services charges, and a requirement for the clerk of  
152 court's remittal of such fees in actions in which the  
153 amount in controversy exceeds a specified amount;  
154 amending s. 34.022, F.S.; adding judges to certain  
155 county courts; providing an effective date.