

House Bill 450

By: Representatives Allen of the 117<sup>th</sup>, Connell of the 115<sup>th</sup>, Burmeister of the 114<sup>th</sup>, Howard of the 118<sup>th</sup>, Anderson of the 116<sup>th</sup> and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 15-6-2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the  
2 number of superior court judges for each judicial circuit, so as to create a new eighth superior  
3 court judgeship for the Augusta Judicial Circuit; to provide for the initial appointment,  
4 election, and term of office of said judge; to provide for the qualifications and for the  
5 compensation, salary, and expense allowance of said judge to be paid by the State of Georgia  
6 and the counties comprising the Augusta Judicial Circuit; to authorize the judges of said  
7 circuit to divide and allocate the work and duties thereto and provide for the duties of the  
8 chief judge; to provide for powers, duties, and responsibilities of judges of said circuit; to  
9 provide for an additional court reporter for said circuit and the compensation of that reporter;  
10 to declare inherent authority; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for  
11 other purposes.

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

13 SECTION 1.

14 Code Section 15-6-2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the number of  
15 superior court judges for each judicial circuit, is amended by striking paragraph (5) in its  
16 entirety and inserting in lieu thereof a new paragraph (5) to read as follows:

17 "(5) Augusta Circuit.....78"

18 SECTION 2.

19 The number of superior court judges of the Augusta Judicial Circuit is increased from seven  
20 to eight. The initial judge to fill the eighth judgeship shall be appointed by the Governor for  
21 a term beginning January 1, 2002, and ending December 31, 2002, and until a successor is  
22 elected and qualified. Thereafter, said eighth judge shall be elected in 2002 and  
23 quadrennially thereafter for a term of office of four years and until his or her successor is  
24 duly elected and qualified.

**SECTION 3.**

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2 The qualifications of such additional judge and his or her successors shall be the same as are  
3 now provided by law for all other superior court judges, and such judge's compensation,  
4 salary, and expense allowance from the State of Georgia and from the counties of such circuit  
5 shall be the same as that of the other judges of the superior courts of the Augusta Judicial  
6 Circuit. The provisions, if any, heretofore enacted for the supplementation by the counties  
7 of said circuit of the salary of the judge of the superior courts of the Augusta Judicial Circuit  
8 shall also be applicable to the additional judge provided for by this Act.

**SECTION 4.**

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10 The eight judges of the superior courts of the Augusta Judicial Circuit in transacting the  
11 business of said courts and in performing their duties and responsibilities shall share, divide,  
12 and allocate the work and duties to be performed by each. In the event of any disagreement  
13 between or among said judges in any respect thereof, the decision of the senior judge in point  
14 of service, who shall be known as the chief judge, shall be controlling. The eight judges of  
15 the superior courts of the Augusta Judicial Circuit shall have and they are clothed with full  
16 power, authority, and discretion to determine, from time to time and from term to term, the  
17 manner of calling the dockets or fixing the calendars and order of business in said courts.  
18 They may assign to one or more of said judges the hearing of trials by jury for a term and the  
19 hearing of all other matters not requiring a trial by jury to one or more of the other judges,  
20 and they may rotate such order of business at the next term. They may conduct trials by jury  
21 at the same time in the same county or otherwise within said circuit, or they may hear  
22 chambers business and motion business at the same time at any place within said circuit.  
23 They may provide in all respects for holding the superior courts of said circuit so as to  
24 facilitate the hearing and determination of all the business of said courts at any time pending  
25 and ready for trial or hearing. In all such matters relating to the manner of fixing, arranging  
26 for, and disposing of the business of said courts and of making appointments as authorized  
27 by law where the judges thereof cannot agree or shall differ, the opinion or order of the chief  
28 judge, as defined in this section, shall control.

**SECTION 5.**

29  
30 The eight judges of superior court of the Augusta Judicial Circuit shall be authorized and  
31 empowered to appoint an additional court reporter for said circuit, whose compensation shall  
32 be as now or hereafter provided by law.

