

House Bill 97 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Ralston of the 7th and Graves of the 12th

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 judges of superior court, so as to provide for a third judge of the superior courts
3 of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit, to provide for a fourth judge of the superior courts of the
4 Cherokee Judicial Circuit, a third judge of the superior courts of the Flint Judicial Circuit,
5 a ninth judge of the superior courts of the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit, and a fifth judge of the
6 superior courts of the Southern Judicial Circuit; to provide for the appointment of such
7 additional judges by the Governor; to provide for the election of successors to the judges
8 initially appointed; to prescribe the powers of such judges; to prescribe the compensation,
9 salary, and expense allowance of such judges to be paid by the State of Georgia and the
10 counties comprising said circuits; to authorize the judges of such circuits to divide and
11 allocate the work and duties thereof; to provide for the manner of impaneling jurors; to
12 provide for an additional court reporter for such circuits; to authorize the governing authority
13 of the counties that comprise such circuits to provide facilities, office space, supplies,
14 equipment, and personnel for such judges; to declare inherent authority; to provide effective
15 dates; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

16 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

17 **Part I**
18 **SECTION 1-1.**

19 Code Section 15-6-2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the number of
20 judges of superior courts, is amended by striking paragraphs (2.1), (9), (18), (20), and (35)
21 and inserting in their place new paragraphs to read as follows:

- 22 "(2.1) Appalachian Circuit 2 3"
- 23 "(9) Cherokee Circuit 3 4"
- 24 "(18) Flint Circuit 2 3"
- 25 "(20) Gwinnett Circuit 8 9"

1 "(35) Southern Circuit 4 5"

2 **Part II**

3 **SECTION 2-1.**

4 One additional judge of the superior courts is added to the Appalachian Judicial Circuit,
5 thereby increasing to three the number of judges of said circuit.

6 **SECTION 2-2.**

7 Said additional judge shall be appointed by the Governor for a term beginning January 1,
8 2006, and continuing through December 31, 2006, and until his or her successor is elected
9 and qualified; such judge shall take office on the date of his or her appointment by the
10 Governor. His or her successor shall be elected in the manner provided by law for the
11 election of judges of the superior courts of this state at the nonpartisan judicial election in
12 2006, for a term of four years beginning on January 1, 2007, and until his or her successor
13 is elected and qualified. Future successors shall be elected at the nonpartisan judicial
14 election each four years after such election for terms of four years and until their successors
15 are elected and qualified. They shall take office on the first day of January following the date
16 of the election.

17 **SECTION 2-3.**

18 The additional judge of the superior courts of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit of Georgia
19 shall have and may exercise all powers, duties, dignity, jurisdiction, privileges, and
20 immunities of the present judges of the superior courts of this state. Any of the judges of the
21 Appalachian Judicial Circuit may preside over any cause, whether in their own or in other
22 circuits, and perform any official act as judge thereof, including sitting on appellate courts
23 as provided by law.

24 **SECTION 2-4.**

25 The qualifications of such additional judge and his or her successors and his or her
26 compensation, salary, and expense allowance from the State of Georgia and from the
27 counties of the superior courts of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit shall be the same as are
28 now provided by law for all other superior court judges. The provisions, if any, enacted for
29 the supplementation by the counties of said circuit of the salary of the judges of the superior
30 courts of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit shall also be applicable to the additional judge
31 provided for by this Act.

SECTION 2-5.

1
2 All writs and processes in the superior courts of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit shall be
3 returnable to the terms of said superior courts as they are now fixed and provided by law, or
4 as they may hereafter be fixed or determined by law, and all terms of said courts shall be held
5 in the same manner as though there were but one judge, it being the intent and purpose of this
6 Act to provide three judges equal in jurisdiction and authority to attend and perform the
7 functions, powers, and duties of the judges of said superior courts and to direct and conduct
8 all hearings and trials in said courts.

SECTION 2-6.

9
10 Upon and after qualification of the additional judge of the superior court of the Appalachian
11 Judicial Circuit, the three judges of said court may adopt, promulgate, amend, and enforce
12 such rules of practice and procedure in consonance with the Constitution and laws of the
13 State of Georgia as they deem suitable and proper for the effective transaction of the business
14 of the court; and, in transacting the business of the court and in performing their duties and
15 responsibilities, they shall share, divide, and allocate the work and duties to be performed by
16 each. In the event of a disagreement among the judges in respect hereof, the majority shall
17 rule, or failing a majority, the decision of the senior judge in point of service, who shall be
18 known as the chief judge, shall be controlling.

SECTION 2-7.

19
20 The drawing and impaneling of all jurors, whether grand, petit, or special, may be by any of
21 the judges of the superior court of said circuit; and they, or any one of them, shall have full
22 power and authority to draw and impanel jurors for service in said courts so as to have jurors
23 for the trial of cases before any of said judges separately or before each of them at the same
24 time.

SECTION 2-8.

25
26 The three judges of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit shall be authorized and empowered to
27 appoint an additional court reporter for such circuit, whose compensation shall be as now or
28 hereafter provided by law.

SECTION 2-9.

29
30 All writs, processes, orders, subpoenas, and any other official paper issuing out of the
31 superior courts of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit may bear teste in the name of any judge
32 of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit, and when issued by and in the name of any judge of said
33 circuit shall be fully valid and may be heard and determined before the same or any other

1 judge of said circuit. Any judge of said circuit may preside over any case therein and
2 perform any official act as judge thereof.

3 **SECTION 2-10.**

4 Upon request of any judge of the circuit, the governing authorities of the counties comprising
5 the Appalachian Judicial Circuit are authorized to furnish the judges of said circuit with
6 suitable courtrooms and facilities, office space, telephones, furniture, office equipment,
7 supplies, and such personnel as may be considered necessary by the court to the proper
8 function of the court. All of the expenditures authorized in this Act are declared to be an
9 expense of the court and payable out of the county treasury as such.

10 **SECTION 2-11.**

11 Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to limit or restrict the inherent powers, duties, and
12 responsibilities of superior court judges provided by the Constitution and statutes of the State
13 of Georgia.

14 **Part III**

15 **SECTION 3-1.**

16 One additional judge of the superior courts is added to the Cherokee Judicial Circuit, thereby
17 increasing to four the number of judges of said circuit.

18 **SECTION 3-2.**

19 Said additional judge shall be appointed by the Governor for a term beginning
20 January 1, 2006, and continuing through December 31, 2006, and until a successor is elected
21 and qualified. A successor shall be elected in the manner provided by law for the election of
22 judges of the superior courts of this state at the nonpartisan judicial election in 2006, for a
23 term of four years beginning on January 1, 2007, and until a successor is elected and
24 qualified. Future successors shall be elected at the nonpartisan judicial election each four
25 years after such election for terms of four years and until their successors are elected and
26 qualified. They shall take office on the first day of January following the date of the election.

27 **SECTION 3-3.**

28 The additional judge of the superior courts of the Cherokee Judicial Circuit of Georgia shall
29 have and may exercise all powers, duties, dignity, jurisdiction, privileges, and immunities
30 of the present judges of the superior courts of this state. Any of the judges of the Cherokee
31 Judicial Circuit may preside over any cause, whether in their own or in other circuits, and

1 perform any official act as judge thereof, including sitting on appellate courts as provided by
2 law.

3 **SECTION 3-4.**

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

11 **SECTION 3-5.**

12 All writs and processes in the superior courts of the Cherokee Judicial Circuit shall be
13 returnable to the terms of such superior courts as they are now fixed and provided by law,
14 or as they may hereafter be fixed or determined by law, and all terms of such courts shall be
15 held in the same manner as though there were but one judge, it being the intent and purpose
16 of this Act to provide four judges equal in jurisdiction and authority to attend and perform
17 the functions, powers, and duties of the judges of such superior courts and to direct and
18 conduct all hearings and trials in such courts.

19 **SECTION 3-6.**

20 Upon and after qualification of the additional judge of the superior court of the Cherokee
21 Judicial Circuit, the four judges of such circuit may adopt, promulgate, amend, and enforce
22 such rules of practice and procedure in consonance with the Constitution and laws of the
23 State of Georgia as they deem suitable and proper for the effective transaction of the business
24 of the court; and, in transacting the business of the court and in performing their duties and
25 responsibilities, they shall share, divide, and allocate the work and duties to be performed by
26 each. In the event of a disagreement among the judges in respect hereof, the decision of the
27 senior judge in point of service, who shall be known as the chief judge, shall be controlling.
28 The four judges of the superior courts of the Cherokee Judicial Circuit shall have and are
29 clothed with full power, authority, and discretion to determine from time to time and term
30 to term the manner of calling the dockets, fixing the calendars, and order of business in such
31 courts. They may assign to one of such judges the hearing of trials by jury for a term and the
32 hearing of all other matters not requiring a trial by jury to the other judges, and they may
33 rotate such order of business at the next term. They may conduct trials by jury at the same
34 time in the same county or otherwise within such circuit, or they may hear chambers business

1 and motion business at the same time at any place within such circuit. They may provide in
2 all respects for holding the superior courts of such circuit so as to facilitate the hearing and
3 determination of all the business of such courts at any time pending and ready for trial or
4 hearing. In all such matters relating to the fixing, arranging for, and disposing of the business
5 of such courts and making appointments as authorized by law where the judges thereof
6 cannot agree or shall differ, the opinion or order of the chief judge as provided for in this Act
7 shall control.

8 **SECTION 3-7.**

9 The drawing and impaneling of all jurors, whether grand, petit, or special, may be by any of
10 the judges of the superior court of such circuit; and they, or any one of them, shall have full
11 power and authority to draw and impanel jurors for service in such courts so as to have jurors
12 for the trial of cases before any of such judges separately or before each of them at the same
13 time.

14 **SECTION 3-8.**

15 The four judges of the Cherokee Judicial Circuit shall be authorized and empowered to
16 appoint an additional court reporter for such circuit, whose compensation shall be as now or
17 hereafter provided by law.

18 **SECTION 3-9.**

19 All writs, processes, orders, subpoenas, and any other official paper issuing out of the
20 superior courts of the Cherokee Judicial Circuit may bear teste in the name of any judge of
21 the Cherokee Judicial Circuit and, when issued by and in the name of any judge of such
22 circuit, shall be fully valid and may be heard and determined before the same or any other
23 judge of such circuit. Any judge of such circuit may preside over any case therein and
24 perform any official act as judge thereof.

25 **SECTION 3-10.**

26 Upon request of any judge of the circuit, the governing authorities of the counties comprising
27 the Cherokee Judicial Circuit are authorized to furnish the judges of such circuit with suitable
28 courtrooms and facilities, office space, telephones, furniture, office equipment, supplies, and
29 such personnel as may be considered necessary by the court to the proper function of the
30 court. All of the expenditures authorized in this Act are declared to be an expense of the court
31 and payable out of the county treasury as such.

SECTION 3-11.

Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to limit or restrict the inherent powers, duties, and responsibilities of superior court judges provided by the Constitution and statutes of the State of Georgia.

Part IV**SECTION 4-1.**

One additional judge of the superior courts is added to the Flint Judicial Circuit, thereby increasing to three the number of judges of said circuit.

SECTION 4-2.

The additional judge provided for in this Act shall be appointed by the Governor for an initial term of office beginning on January 1, 2006, and ending on December 31, 2006, and until a successor is elected and qualified. A successor shall be elected in the manner provided by law for the election of judges of the superior courts of this state at the nonpartisan judicial election in 2006, for a term of four years beginning on the first day of January, 2007, and until a successor is elected and qualified. Future successors shall be elected at the nonpartisan judicial election each four years after such election for terms of four years and until their successors are elected and qualified. Successors shall take office on the first day of January following the date of their election.

SECTION 4-3.

Every person who shall offer for nomination and election as one of the judges of the superior courts of the Flint Judicial Circuit of Georgia shall designate with the proper authority in all general elections the specific judgeship for which he or she is offering as a candidate by naming the incumbent judge whom he or she desires to succeed, and thereupon he or she shall be qualified, if otherwise qualified to offer as a candidate for said specific judgeship and no other. In the event there is no incumbent judge in the place for which such person desires to offer, the candidate shall qualify by announcing his or her intention to offer as a candidate for the office for which there is no incumbent.

SECTION 4-4.

The additional judge of the superior courts of the Flint Judicial Circuit of Georgia shall have and may exercise all powers, duties, dignities, jurisdiction, privileges, and immunities of the present judges of the superior courts of this state. Any of the judges of said courts may

1 preside over any cause, whether in their own or in other circuits, and perform any official act
2 as judge thereof, including sitting on appellate courts as provided by law.

3 **SECTION 4-5.**

4 The judge of said courts senior in length of continuous service as a superior court judge shall
5 be the chief judge of the Flint Judicial Circuit. Such chief judge shall be responsible for the
6 administration and the expeditious disposition of the business of the superior courts of said
7 circuit, both civil and criminal, and shall have power to make such rules as he or she shall
8 deem necessary or proper for such purpose but not in conflict with the general laws of this
9 state, which rules, when approved by said chief judge and filed in the offices of each of the
10 clerks of the superior courts of the counties comprising the Flint Judicial Circuit, shall be
11 binding upon the other judge or judges of said circuit. The chief judge shall be vested with
12 the power to make all appointments whenever the law provides for the superior court judge
13 to make appointments. Such chief judge may by published rule, or from time to time by
14 order, allocate the jurisdiction and powers of the superior courts of said circuit and the duties
15 of the judges thereof; may assign to the other judges of said circuit such of the business of
16 said circuit as the chief judge shall deem appropriate; may make and publish calendars, both
17 civil and criminal; may require reports from the clerks of court of said circuit and from other
18 judges of said circuit relative to business of the courts; and generally shall supervise and
19 direct the disposition of all business, both civil and criminal, of said courts.

20 **SECTION 4-6.**

21 (a) The compensation, salary, and expense allowance of said additional judge of the superior
22 courts of the Flint Judicial Circuit shall be the same as that provided by the State of Georgia
23 for other judges of the superior courts of Georgia.

24 (b) Said additional judge shall receive a local salary supplement in the same amount
25 heretofore prescribed by law for the other judges of the superior courts of the Flint Judicial
26 Circuit; and such supplement shall be paid from funds of the counties comprising the Flint
27 Judicial Circuit in the same proportions heretofore prescribed by law for the supplements of
28 the other judges of the superior courts of the Flint Judicial Circuit.

29 **SECTION 4-7.**

30 All writs, processes, orders, subpoenas, and other official papers issuing out of the superior
31 courts of the Flint Judicial Circuit may bear teste in the name of any judge of said Flint
32 Judicial Circuit. When issued by and in the name of any judge of said circuit, they shall be
33 fully valid and may be determined before any judge in the regular course of business of said

1 courts. Any judge of said courts may preside over any cause therein and perform any official
2 act as judge thereof.

3 **SECTION 4-8.**

4 The drawing and impaneling of all jurors, whether grand, petit, or special, may be by any of
5 the judges of the superior courts of the circuit. Any of said judges shall have full power and
6 authority to draw and impanel jurors for service in said courts so as to have jurors for the trial
7 of cases before any of said judges separately or before each of them at the same time.

8 **SECTION 4-9.**

9 The chief judge of the Flint Judicial Circuit shall be authorized to employ an additional court
10 reporter for such duties and for such compensation as the chief judge sees fit up to and
11 including, but not exceeding, the remuneration of the present court reporters of the Flint
12 Judicial Circuit as the same is now fixed or may hereafter be fixed by law. In the
13 employment of said court reporter, the additional judge shall have the right to select and
14 approve the individual to fill said position, and said court reporter shall be assigned to the
15 additional judge. However, the chief judge, under the provisions of Section 5 of this Act,
16 shall be authorized to assign temporarily said court reporter to other duties in order to
17 equalize the workload and when the business of the courts shall require the same.

18 **SECTION 4-10.**

19 Upon request of the chief judge, the board of commissioners of each county comprising the
20 Flint Judicial Circuit is authorized to furnish all judges of said courts with suitable
21 courtrooms and facilities, office space, telephone, furniture, office equipment, supplies, and
22 such personnel as may be considered necessary to the proper functioning of the courts. All
23 of the expenditures authorized in this Act are declared to be an expense of the court and
24 payable out of each county treasury as such.

25 **SECTION 4-11.**

26 Nothing enumerated in this Act shall be deemed to limit or restrict the inherent powers,
27 duties, and responsibilities of superior court judges provided by the Constitution and statutes
28 of the State of Georgia.

Part V**SECTION 5-1.**

1
2
3 The additional judge of the superior court of the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit shall be appointed
4 by the Governor for a term beginning January 1, 2006, and expiring December 31, 2006, and
5 until a successor is elected and qualified. At the nonpartisan judicial election to be held in
6 2006, there shall be elected a successor to the first additional judge appointed as provided for
7 above, and he or she shall take office on the first day of January, 2007, and serve for a term
8 of office of four years and until a successor is duly elected and qualified. All subsequent
9 successors to such judge shall be elected at the nonpartisan judicial election conducted in the
10 year in which the term of office shall expire for a term of four years and until his or her
11 successor is duly elected and qualified. Said elections shall be held and conducted as is now
12 or may hereafter be provided by law for the election of judges of the superior courts of the
13 State of Georgia.

SECTION 5-2.

14
15 The additional judge of the superior court of the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit shall have and
16 may exercise all powers, duties, dignities, jurisdiction, privileges, and immunities of the
17 present judges of the superior courts of this state. Any of the judges of said court may preside
18 over any cause, whether in their own or in other circuits, and perform any official act as
19 judge thereof, including sitting on appellate courts as provided by law.

SECTION 5-3.

20
21 The compensation, salary, and contingent expense allowance of said additional judge of the
22 superior court of the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit shall be the same as that of other judges of the
23 superior courts of Georgia. The additional judge shall also be paid a county supplement by
24 the county comprising said circuit in the same manner and to the same extent as the present
25 superior court judges of said circuit are paid.

SECTION 5-4.

26
27 All writs, processes, orders, subpoenas, and any other official paper issuing out of the
28 superior court of the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit may bear teste in the name of any judge of
29 said circuit and, when issued by and in the name of any of said judges of said circuit, shall
30 be fully valid and may be held and determined before any judge of said circuit.

SECTION 5-5.

1
2 Upon and after qualification of the additional judge of the superior court of the Gwinnett
3 Judicial Circuit, the nine judges of said court shall be authorized to adopt, promulgate,
4 amend, and enforce such rules of procedure in consonance with the Constitution and laws
5 of the State of Georgia as they deem suitable and proper for the effective transaction of the
6 business of the court; and, in transacting the business of the court and in performing their
7 duties and responsibilities, they shall divide and allocate the work and duties to be performed
8 by each. In the event of a disagreement between or among said judges affecting the duties
9 and responsibilities of the judges of the superior court of the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit, the
10 decision of the senior judge in term of current continuous, uninterrupted service shall be
11 controlling.

SECTION 5-6.

12
13 The judge of said court, senior in term of current continuous, uninterrupted service as a judge
14 of the superior court, shall be the presiding judge of said court in whom shall be vested the
15 power to make all appointments whenever the law provides for the superior court judge to
16 make appointments, except as herein provided.

SECTION 5-7.

17
18 The drawing and impaneling of all jurors, whether grand, petit, or special, may be by any of
19 the judges of the superior court of said circuit; and any such judge of the superior court of
20 said circuit shall have full power and authority to draw and impanel jurors for service in said
21 court so as to have jurors for the trial of cases before each of said judges separately or before
22 each of them at the same time.

SECTION 5-8.

23
24 The nine judges of the superior court of the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit shall be authorized and
25 empowered to employ an additional court reporter for such duties and for such compensation
26 as such judges see fit, up to and including, but not exceeding, the remuneration of the present
27 court reporters of the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit as the same is now fixed or may hereafter be
28 fixed.

SECTION 5-9.

29
30 The governing authority of the county comprising the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit is fully
31 authorized and empowered to provide suitable courtrooms, jury rooms, and chambers for the
32 nine judges of the superior court of the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit upon the recommendation
33 of said judges.

Part VI**SECTION 6-1.**

One additional judge of the superior courts is added to the Southern Judicial Circuit, thereby increasing to five the number of judges of said circuit.

SECTION 6-2.

Said additional judge shall be appointed by the Governor for a term beginning January 1, 2006, and continuing through December 31, 2006, and until a successor is elected and qualified; such judge shall take office on the date of his or her appointment by the Governor. A successor shall be elected in the manner provided by law for the election of judges of the superior courts of this state at the nonpartisan judicial election in 2006, for a term of four years beginning on January 1, 2007, and until a successor is elected and qualified. Future successors shall be elected at the nonpartisan judicial election each four years after such election for terms of four years and until their successors are elected and qualified. They shall take office on the first day of January following the date of the election.

SECTION 6-3.

The additional judge of the superior courts of the Southern Judicial Circuit of Georgia shall have and may exercise all powers, duties, dignity, jurisdiction, privileges, and immunities of the present judges of the superior courts of this state. Any of the judges of the Southern Judicial Circuit may preside over any cause, whether in their own or in other circuits, and perform any official act as judge thereof, including sitting on appellate courts as provided by law.

SECTION 6-4.

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

SECTION 6-5.

1
2 All writs and processes in the superior courts of the Southern Judicial Circuit shall be
3 returnable to the terms of said superior courts as they are now fixed and provided by law, or
4 as they may hereafter be fixed or determined by law, and all terms of said courts shall be held
5 in the same manner as though there were but one judge, it being the intent and purpose of this
6 Act to provide five judges equal in jurisdiction and authority to attend and perform the
7 functions, powers, and duties of the judges of said superior courts and to direct and conduct
8 all hearings and trials in said courts.

SECTION 6-6.

9
10 Upon and after qualification of the additional judge of the superior court of the Southern
11 Judicial Circuit, the five judges of said court may adopt, promulgate, amend, and enforce
12 such rules of practice and procedure in consonance with the Constitution and laws of the
13 State of Georgia as they deem suitable and proper for the effective transaction of the business
14 of the court; and, in transacting the business of the court and in performing their duties and
15 responsibilities, they shall share, divide, and allocate the work and duties to be performed by
16 each. In the event of a disagreement among the judges in respect hereof, the majority shall
17 rule, or failing a majority, the decision of the senior judge in point of service, who shall be
18 known as the chief judge, shall be controlling.

SECTION 6-7.

19
20 The drawing and impaneling of all jurors, whether grand, petit, or special, may be by any of
21 the judges of the superior court of said circuit; and they, or any one of them, shall have full
22 power and authority to draw and impanel jurors for service in said courts so as to have jurors
23 for the trial of cases before any of said judges separately or before each of them at the same
24 time.

SECTION 6-8.

25
26 The five judges of the Southern Judicial Circuit shall be authorized and empowered to
27 appoint an additional court reporter for such circuit, whose compensation shall be as now or
28 hereafter provided by law.

SECTION 6-9.

29
30 All writs, processes, orders, subpoenas, and any other official paper issuing out of the
31 superior courts of the Southern Judicial Circuit may bear teste in the name of any judge of
32 the Southern Judicial Circuit, and when issued by and in the name of any judge of said circuit
33 shall be fully valid and may be heard and determined before the same or any other judge of

1 said circuit. Any judge of said circuit may preside over any case therein and perform any
2 official act as judge thereof.

3 **SECTION 6-10.**

4 Upon request of any judge of the circuit, the governing authorities of the counties comprising
5 the Southern Judicial Circuit are authorized to furnish the judges of said circuit with suitable
6 courtrooms and facilities, office space, telephones, furniture, office equipment, supplies, and
7 such personnel as may be considered necessary by the court to the proper function of the
8 court. All of the expenditures authorized in this Act are declared to be an expense of the court
9 and payable out of the county treasury as such.

10 **SECTION 6-11.**

11 Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to limit or restrict the inherent powers, duties, and
12 responsibilities of superior court judges provided by the Constitution and statutes of the State
13 of Georgia.

14 **Part VII**

15 **SECTION 7-1.**

16 (a) For purposes of making the initial appointment of the judge to fill the superior court
17 judgeships created by this Act, this Act shall become effective upon its approval by the
18 Governor or its becoming law without such approval.

19 (b) For all other purposes, this Act shall become effective January 1, 2006.

20 **SECTION 7-2.**

21 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.