

House Bill 482

By: Representatives Kelley of the 16<sup>th</sup>, Silcox of the 53<sup>rd</sup>, Evans of the 57<sup>th</sup>, and Smith of the 18<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 6 of Title 15 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to general provisions regarding superior courts, so as to provide for superior court  
3 judicial officers in certain judicial circuits; to provide for the appointment, qualifications,  
4 terms, duties, and employment status of such judicial officers; to provide for related matters;  
5 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Article 1 of Chapter 6 of Title 15 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
9 general provisions regarding superior courts, is amended by adding a new Code section to  
10 read as follows:

11 "15-6-37.

12 (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in any judicial circuit of this state with 15  
13 or more judges of the superior court, as provided for in Code Section 15-6-2, the governing  
14 authorities of the counties that make up such circuit are authorized to provide funding for  
15 up to five judicial officers to serve in the superior courts of such circuit.

16 (b) In the event that a county or counties provide funding for judicial officers as provided  
17 for in subsection (a) of this Code section, the chief judge of the circuit, after consulting  
18 with a majority of the superior court judges in such circuit, may appoint qualified  
19 individuals as judicial officers in the superior courts of such circuit. Judicial officers shall  
20 have all of the qualifications provided for in Code Section 15-6-4 for superior court judges;  
21 provided, however, that such judicial officers shall not be elected.

22 (c) Judicial officers appointed pursuant to this Code section shall have all powers and  
23 duties of a judge of the superior court; provided, however, that judicial officers shall not  
24 preside over any case or matter related to a serious violent felony as such term is defined  
25 in Code Section 17-10-6.1, and provided, further, that the chief judge of a circuit, after  
26 consulting with a majority of the superior court judges in such circuit, may place such  
27 additional limitations on the use of such judicial officers in the circuit.

28 (d) Judicial officers appointed pursuant to this Code section shall be appointed to terms  
29 not to exceed two years; provided, however, that a judicial officer may be reappointed to  
30 succeed himself or herself.

31 (e) Judicial officers appointed pursuant to this Code section shall be employees of the  
32 county or counties that make up the judicial circuit in which they are appointed. Such  
33 judicial officers shall not be considered state employees for any reason, and the counties  
34 that make up such circuit shall be responsible for the compensation, benefits, travel, and  
35 other expenses for such judicial officers."

36 **SECTION 2.**

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