



## **Administrative Services Committee Meeting**

Meeting Date: May 13, 2025

HB85 Superior Court Judicial Compensation

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<b>Department:</b>	Superior Court Administration
<b>Presenter:</b>	Nolan Martin, Court Administrator
<b>Caption:</b>	Motion to approve Chief Judge supplement, locality pay, and fringe benefits for Superior Court Judges for remainder of FY2025 to implement compensation plan under House Bill 85, pending signature of House Bill 85 by the Governor.
<b>Background:</b>	<p>The Georgia General Assembly passed House Bill 85 (HB85) during the 2025 session. The purpose of HB85 is to increase the state portion of Superior Court Judges' compensation while decreasing the county responsibility toward supplemental pay. HB85 places a cap on locality pay, fringe benefits, and a Chief Judge supplement to be paid by the county.</p> <p>Senate Bill 145, which has been signed into law, adds a sixth Superior Court Judge to the Augusta Judicial Circuit effective January 1, 2026.</p>
<b>Analysis:</b>	<p>Under HB85, each Superior Court Judge can opt in to the new State pay arrangement or choose to remain on their current local supplement. All Augusta Circuit Superior Court Judges have agreed to move to the State, which will substantially reduce Augusta's costs for FY2026 and beyond. However, the Chief Judge supplement and fringe benefits allowed under the law must be in place as of June 30, 2025, to carry over to the State.</p> <p>Superior Court is requesting that Augusta implement increases to the Chief Judge supplement and the fringe benefits for all Judges as of June 21, 2025. The requested increase for the Chief Judge supplement is \$1,000 per month, and the requested increase for fringe benefits is \$1,000 per month per Judge for the remainder of 2025. The fringe benefits reimburse contributions toward the Judges' retirement plan and insurance costs. Locality pay for FY2026 is set by HB85.</p> <p>If HB85 is not signed into law by Governor Kemp, the requested increases will not be implemented, and Augusta will continue to pay the current local supplement costs.</p>
<b>Financial Impact:</b>	For the remainder of FY2025, the total estimated cost of the requested increases is approximately \$42,000. Effective January 1, 2026, the Judges' compensation would shift to the State, and overall Augusta cost for judicial supplements will decrease by approximately \$110,000 from the current level

for the five existing Judges. When costs for the new sixth Judge are included, the net savings to Augusta will be approximately \$69,990 per year.

**Alternatives:**

Do not implement the requested increases and remain with the current local supplements for Superior Court Judges.

**Recommendation:**

To approve Chief Judge supplement, locality pay, and fringe benefits for Superior Court Judges for remainder of FY2025 to implement compensation plan under House Bill 85, pending signature of House Bill 85 by the Governor.

**Funds are available in the following accounts:**

General Fund contingency for FY2025 increases; FY2026 changes will be reflected in Superior Court budget.

**REVIEWED AND**  
**APPROVED BY:**