

The Supreme Court of Montana
Office of the Court Administrator

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TO: Law and Justice Interim Committee

FROM: Beth McLaughlin
Supreme Court Administrator

RE: Bill Draft Requests

The Judicial Branch has two potential pieces of legislation we are requesting through the Law and Justice Interim Committee. The proposed bills are:

1. Revise 3-5-603, which currently requires court reporters to file original stenographic notes with the Clerk of the District Court. The Judicial Branch provides a cloud storage system for steno notes meaning the current statute is obsolete. The proposed bill would also clean-up 3-5-126, which addresses the record in a standing master hearing, to match 3-5-603 and 3-5-604. None of these changes are substantive but reflect current practices, which have changed in the digital age.
2. Revise 3-5-102, which sets the number of judges per district to reflect additional judges in the 18th and 11th Judicial Districts. This is pending the release of the Governor's proposed budget. Please note also, while we will request this bill as a placeholder, depending on the nature the session, we may simply ask to have any change in judge numbers added through the Section D budget companion bill.

Thanks for your consideration of these requests.