

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

The meeting was called to order by Representative Bob Frey at
Chairperson

3:30 ~~am~~/p.m. on January 16, 1984 in room 526-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Justice was excused. Representative Erne was absent.

Committee staff present:

Jerry Donaldson, Legislative Research Department
Mike Heim, Legislative Research Department
Mary Ann Torrence, Revisor of Statutes' Office
Nedra Spingler, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Randy Hearrell, Research Director, Judicial Council
Mary Galligan, Legislative Research Department
Marjorie Van Buren, Office of the Judicial Administrator

The minutes of the meeting of January 12, 1984, were approved.

The Chairman said, in order for the Committee to have a better understanding of the judicial budget and needs of the appellate court, the meeting would consist of reviews of these matters. He noted that the Judicial Council study conducted during the summer on the appellate court was requested by the Governor for the purpose of making recommendations to the Governor as to that court's needs.

Randy Hearrell, Judicial Council, reviewed results of the Judicial Council study. He noted what the study committee believed were limitations placed on the court by JSAC provisions. He outlined the issues considered by the committee which resulted in the conclusion that, through no fault of the court, the caseload backlog is a problem which should be addressed. Three additional judges and staff are needed. This would be less costly than utilizing additional special panels. The staff of Central Research should be increased to help alleviate bottlenecks in opinion writing. The salaries of Kansas appellate court judges are much lower than comparable courts in other states and should be raised to attract capable candidates and to improve morale. A copy of the full report is available from the Judicial Council.

Mary Galligan, Research Department, reviewed the Governor's budget proposals as they pertain to the judicial system (see pages I-47 through I-54 of the Governor's Report on the Budget, 1985). She noted what, from preliminary study, appeared to be recommendations by the Governor for funding and those items requested which were not recommended for funding. It appears that the Governor's recommendations include funds for district courts but do not address the needs of the appellate court although there is a small increase in salaries. It was noted that the report on the Judicial Council study was not available to the Governor when his budget was finalized.

Marjorie Van Buren noted the increasing problem each year with the Budget Division cutting important items from the judicial budget requests making it necessary for her office to get cuts restored by the legislature. She believed funds for vital necessities for the judicial system were cut from the budget each year.

Ms. Galligan was requested to give the Committee a final breakdown of the Governor's budget recommendations for the judiciary when it is available.

The Chairman said the Committee may want to make a written recommendation regarding the appellate court judges and salaries.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.