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**SENATE BILL NO. 158**

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 7, 2026

*A BILL to amend and reenact § 17.1-507 of the Code of Virginia, relating to maximum number of judges in each judicial circuit.*

Patron—Perry

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 17.1-507 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 17.1-507. Maximum number of judges; residence requirement; compensation; powers; etc.**

A. For the several judicial circuits there shall be judges, the maximum number as hereinafter set forth, who shall during their service reside within their respective circuits and whose compensation and powers shall be the same as now and hereafter prescribed for circuit judges.

The maximum number of judges of the circuits shall be as follows:

First — 6

Second — 8

Third — 4

Fourth — 8

Fifth — 4

Sixth — 3

Seventh — 5

Eighth — 3

Ninth — 5

Tenth — 4

Eleventh — 3

Twelfth — 6

Thirteenth — 7

Fourteenth — 5

Fifteenth — 12

Sixteenth — 6

Seventeenth — 4

Eighteenth — 3

Nineteenth — 15

Twentieth — 5 6

Twenty-first — 3

Twenty-second — 4

Twenty-third — 5

Twenty-fourth — 6

Twenty-fifth — 7

Twenty-sixth — 8

Twenty-seventh — 6

Twenty-eighth — 4

Twenty-ninth — 5

Thirtieth — 4

Thirty-first — 7

B. No additional circuit court judge shall be authorized or provided for any judicial circuit until the Judicial Council has made a study of the need for such additional circuit court judge and has reported its findings and recommendations to the House and Senate Committees for Courts of Justice. The boundary of any judicial circuit shall not be changed until a study has been made by the Judicial Council and a report of its findings and recommendations made to said Committees.

C. If the Judicial Council finds the need for an additional circuit court judge after a study is made pursuant to subsection B, the study shall be made available to the Compensation Board and the House and Senate Committees for Courts of Justice and the Judicial Council shall publish notice of such finding in a publication of general circulation among attorneys licensed to practice in the Commonwealth. The Compensation Board shall make a study of the need to provide additional courtroom security and deputy court clerk staffing. This study shall be reported to the House and Senate Committees for Courts of Justice, and to the Department of

59 Planning and Budget.