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HOUSE BILL NO. 443**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE**(Proposed by the House Committee for Courts of Justice
on February 4, 2026)

(Patrons Prior to Substitute—Delegates Hope, McQuinn [HB 194], and Reid [HB 46])

*A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 16.1-69.6:1 and 17.1-507 of the Code of Virginia, relating to maximum number of judges in each judicial district and circuit.***Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That §§ 16.1-69.6:1 and 17.1-507 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 16.1-69.6:1. Number of judges.**

For the several judicial districts there shall be full-time general district court judges and juvenile and domestic relations district court judges, the maximum number as hereinafter set forth, who shall during their service reside within their respective districts, except as provided in § 16.1-69.16, and whose compensation and powers shall be the same as now and hereafter prescribed for general district court judges and juvenile and domestic relations district court judges.

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

| | General District Court Judges | Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Judges |
|----------------|----------------------------------|--|
| First | 4 | 4 |
| Second | 7 | 7 |
| Two-A | 2 | 1 |
| Third | 2 | 3 |
| Fourth | 6 | 5 |
| Fifth | 3 | 2 |
| Sixth | 5 | 3 |
| Seventh | 4 | 4 |
| Eighth | 3 | 3 |
| Ninth | 4 | 4 |
| Tenth | 3 | 3 |
| Eleventh | 3 | 3 |
| Twelfth | 5-6 | 6-7 |
| Thirteenth | 6 | 5 |
| Fourteenth | 5 | 5 |
| Fifteenth | 8 | 9-10 |
| Sixteenth | 4 | 6 |
| Seventeenth | 3 | 2 |
| Eighteenth | 2 | 2 |
| Nineteenth | 12 | 8 |
| Twentieth | 4 | 4 |
| Twenty-first | 2 | 2 |
| Twenty-second | 3 | 4 |
| Twenty-third | 4 | 5 |
| Twenty-fourth | 3 | 6 |
| Twenty-fifth | 4 | 5 |
| Twenty-sixth | 5-6 | 7 |
| Twenty-seventh | 5 | 5 |
| Twenty-eighth | 3 | 3 |
| Twenty-ninth | 2 | 3 |
| Thirtieth | 2 | 3 |
| Thirty-first | 6 | 6 |

The election or appointment of any district judge shall be subject to the provisions of § 16.1-69.9:3.

§ 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

62 Sixth — 3
63 Seventh — 5
64 Eighth — 3
65 Ninth — 5
66 Tenth — 4
67 Eleventh — 3
68 Twelfth — 6
69 Thirteenth — 7
70 Fourteenth — 5
71 Fifteenth — 12
72 Sixteenth — 6
73 Seventeenth — 4
74 Eighteenth — 3
75 Nineteenth — 15
76 Twentieth — ~~5~~ 6
77 Twenty-first — 3
78 Twenty-second — 4
79 Twenty-third — 5
80 Twenty-fourth — 6
81 Twenty-fifth — 7
82 Twenty-sixth — 8
83 Twenty-seventh — ~~6~~ 7
84 Twenty-eighth — 4
85 Twenty-ninth — 5
86 Thirtieth — 4
87 Thirty-first — 7

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

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