

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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SENATE BILL 698

Short Title: Increase Voter Accountability of Judges. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Rabon (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

January 10, 2018

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO AMEND THE NORTH CAROLINA CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW
FREQUENT ELECTION OF JUDGES BY CREATING TWO-YEAR TERMS OF
OFFICE FOR JUSTICES AND JUDGES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) Section 10 of Article IV of the North Carolina Constitution reads
as rewritten:

"Sec. 10. District Courts.

(1) The General Assembly shall, from time to time, divide the State into a convenient
number of local court districts and shall prescribe where the District Courts shall sit, but a
District Court must sit in at least one place in each county. District Judges shall be elected for
each district for a term of ~~four~~ two years, in a manner prescribed by law. When more than one
District Judge is authorized and elected for a district, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court
shall designate one of the judges as Chief District Judge. Every District Judge shall reside in
the district for which he is elected.

(2) For each county, the senior regular resident Judge of the Superior Court serving the
county shall appoint from nominations submitted by the Clerk of the Superior Court of the
county, one or more Magistrates who shall be officers of the District Court. The initial term of
appointment for a magistrate shall be for two years and subsequent terms shall be for four
years.

(3) The number of District Judges and Magistrates shall, from time to time, be
determined by the General Assembly.

(4) ~~Vacancies~~ Except as otherwise provided in this section, vacancies in the office of
District Judge shall be filled for the unexpired term in a manner prescribed by law. Vacancies
in the office of Magistrate shall be filled for the unexpired term in the manner provided for
original appointment to the office, unless otherwise provided by the General Assembly.

(5) All terms of office for persons elected prior to July 1, 2018, to the office of District
Judge shall expire on December 31, 2018. All terms of office for persons appointed to fill a
vacancy in an elected term for the office of District Judge shall expire December 31, 2018.

(6) All District Judges shall be elected to a two-year term of office beginning with the
general election held in 2018."

SECTION 1.(b) Section 16 of Article IV of the North Carolina Constitution reads
as rewritten:

**"Sec. 16. Terms of office and election of Justices of the Supreme Court, Judges of the
Court of Appeals, and Judges of the Superior Court.**



