

**2015 Legislature - Operating Budget
Transaction Compare - House Structure
Between 16GovAmd+ and House Fin2**

Numbers and Language Differences Agencies: Judiciary

Agency: Judiciary

	Column	Trans Type	Total Expenditure	Personal Services	Travel	Services	Commodities	Capital Outlay	Grants	Misc	PFT	PPT	TMP
Alaska Court System													
Appellate Courts													
Additional Personal Services Reduction Attributable to Unpaid Days Off	House Fin2	Dec	-46.6	-46.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
1004 Gen Fund (UGF)			-46.6										
* Allocation Difference *			-46.6	-46.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Trial Courts													
Facility Operations and Maintenance	16GovAmd+	Inc	217.0	0.0	0.0	217.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
<i>The court system leases court facilities from private landlords throughout the state. For FY16, \$95,200 is required to fund increased lease expenses in Nome, Dillingham, Barrow, Homer, and Wrangell. The court system is also requesting an additional \$29,000 for utility increases in Anchorage and Palmer and \$161,700 for increased cost associated with snowplowing and janitorial contracts in Anchorage, Kenai, and Palmer.</i>													
1004 Gen Fund (UGF)			179.2										
1007 I/A Rcpts (Other)			37.8										
Facility Operations and Maintenance - UGF Only	House Fin2	Inc	179.2	0.0	0.0	179.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
<i>The court system leases court facilities from private landlords throughout the state. For FY16, \$95,200 is required to fund increased lease expenses in Nome, Dillingham, Barrow, Homer, and Wrangell. The court system is also requesting an additional \$29,000 for utility increases in Anchorage and Palmer and \$161,700 for increased cost associated with snowplowing and janitorial contracts in Anchorage, Kenai, and Palmer.</i>													
1004 Gen Fund (UGF)			179.2										
Additional Personal Services Reduction Attributable to Unpaid Days Off	House Fin2	Dec	-390.0	-390.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
1004 Gen Fund (UGF)			-390.0										
Additional Reductions in Services, Supplies, and Equipment Funding	House Fin2	Dec	-395.0	0.0	0.0	-45.0	-150.0	-200.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
1004 Gen Fund (UGF)			-395.0										
Reductions in Supplies Associated with Decrease in Law Library Hours	House Fin2	Dec	-34.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	-34.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
1004 Gen Fund (UGF)			-34.2										
* Allocation Difference *			-857.0	-390.0	0.0	-82.8	-184.2	-200.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Administration and Support													
Additional Personal Services Reduction Attributable to Unpaid Days Off	House Fin2	Dec	-57.2	-57.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
1004 Gen Fund (UGF)			-57.2										
* Allocation Difference *			-57.2	-57.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
** Appropriation Difference **			-960.8	-493.8	0.0	-82.8	-184.2	-200.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Therapeutic Courts													
Therapeutic Courts													
Additional Personal Services Reduction Attributable to Unpaid Days Off	House Fin2	Dec	-6.8	-6.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
1004 Gen Fund (UGF)			-6.8										

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Therapeutic Courts (continued)													
Therapeutic Courts (continued)													
* Allocation Difference *			-6.8	-6.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
** Appropriation Difference **			-6.8	-6.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Commission on Judicial Conduct													
Commission on Judicial Conduct													
Reduction Attributable to Unpaid Days Off													
1004 Gen Fund (UGF)			-3.0										
* Allocation Difference *			-3.0	-3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
** Appropriation Difference **			-3.0	-3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Judicial Council													
Judicial Council													
Advertising for Public Feedback on Performance of Judges and Applicant Qualifications			20.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0

The Alaska Judicial Council depends on public involvement to perform its constitutional and statutory duties related to the selection and retention of judges. Until recent years, the Council had relied on a mixture of paid and non-paid advertising to involve and inform the public about these important governmental functions. Since advertising was removed from the Council's budget, it has relied solely on non-paid outreach. While the non-paid methods successfully reach some individuals, the absence of paid advertising has coincided with a dramatic drop off in involvement by members of the general public. Council members thus are deprived of information that could help them in their duties, and members of the public who might have wished to be involved are not heard. The effect that the requested increment would have in each of the Council's areas of responsibility is described below.

Soliciting public input on judicial applicants: The Alaska Judicial Council's longstanding procedures for evaluating applicants for judgeships include participation by members of the public. The most important tool for involving the public is an in-person hearing conducted in the town where the vacancy has occurred. At these hearings, members of the public comment on the qualifications of the applicants, and tell the Council members what qualities or characteristics are important to them for their local judge and what specific problems are facing their local justice system. Although the Council has continued to use non-paid methods of soliciting public input (such as posting notices on the state's on-line system and the Council's web site, issuing press releases, and asking local court staff to post notices in the courthouse and around town), the Council's inability to use paid advertising has depressed public participation in these hearings over the past two years. A portion of the requested increment would be used to publicize the hearing dates and times in local communities.

Soliciting public input on evaluation of judges standing for retention: Public comment is also integral to the Council's retention evaluation process, and it has been the Council's practice to conduct a statewide public hearing for the purpose of receiving public testimony on the performance of judges standing for retention. In 2014, the Council attempted to involve the public in its evaluation of judges standing for retention without paid advertising. Consistent with intent language in HB266, Council staff worked closely with the Legislative Information Office to publicize the statewide retention election hearing held on June 5, 2014. However, for the first time in memory, no members of the public testified on any of the fourteen judges standing for retention. The Council thus was deprived of important information that members of the public could have provided about the qualifications of the judges standing for retention, and members of the public who might have wished to comment were not heard.

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Judicial Council (continued)

Judicial Council (continued)

Advertising for Public Feedback on
Performance of Judges and Applicant
Qualifications (continued)

A portion of the requested increment would be used to solicit public input throughout the judicial performance evaluation process, and to publicize the date/time/purpose of the statewide public hearing on judges who will stand for retention in 2016.

Advertising of judicial performance evaluation and retention recommendations to the public: To enable voters to make informed decisions about whether judges should be retained in office, the legislature requires the Council to publicize its evaluations of judges and its recommendations to the voters. It is important for voters to understand the exhaustive process the Judicial Council uses to evaluate judges standing for retention. Voters who understand the Council's evaluation process will understand that they can access the detailed evaluation materials for themselves to make an informed vote. Alternatively, voters will understand that they can access the Judicial Council's recommendations if they do not wish to review the voluminous evaluation materials themselves. The increment would be used to publicize the availability of the Judicial Council's evaluation materials for all judges, and the Judicial Council's recommendations to voters on all judges standing for retention. Consistent with a commitment made by the Council's executive director during a prior legislative session, the Judicial Council will not use the increment to respond to opposition to a judge or justice. Rather, the Council will use advertising funds to publicize its recommendations and the information upon which it relied in making its recommendations, and to inform the public about the evaluation process.

Summary: The Alaska Judicial Council requests that the legislature approve an increment of 20.0 to restore advertising funding so the Council can effectively obtain public input when it evaluates judicial applicants and judges, and to insure that Alaskans are aware of the information they need to vote on the retention of judges. he information they need to vote on the retention of judges.

1004 Gen Fund (UGF)	20.0												
Partially Fund Outreach for Performance of Judges and Applicant Qualifications		House Fin2	Inc	5.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0

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Partially Fund Outreach for Performance of Judges and Applicant Qualifications (continued)													
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	1004 Gen Fund (UGF)		5.0										
	Reduction Attributable to Unpaid Days Off	House Fin2	Dec	-4.7	-4.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
	1004 Gen Fund (UGF)		-4.7										
	Reduction in Travel, Contractual, and Supply Funding	House Fin2	Dec	-22.0	0.0	-15.0	-2.0	-5.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
	1004 Gen Fund (UGF)		-22.0										
	Delete Courtwatch Grant Funding	House Fin2	Dec	-44.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-44.0	0.0	0	0	0

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Judicial Council (continued)													
Judicial Council (continued)													
Delete Courtwatch Grant Funding (continued)													
1004 Gen Fund (UGF)			-44.0										
* Allocation Difference *			-85.7	-4.7	-15.0	-17.0	-5.0	0.0	-44.0	0.0	0	0	0
** Appropriation Difference **			-85.7	-4.7	-15.0	-17.0	-5.0	0.0	-44.0	0.0	0	0	0
*** Agency Difference ***			-1,056.3	-508.3	-15.0	-99.8	-189.2	-200.0	-44.0	0.0	0	0	0
**** All Agencies Difference ****			-1,056.3	-508.3	-15.0	-99.8	-189.2	-200.0	-44.0	0.0	0	0	0

Column Definitions

16GovAmd+ (16Governor's Amended +) -

House Fin2 (FY16 House Finance) - The version of the FY2016 operating bill adopted by the House Finance Committee.