

1 INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2015-006

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3 REQUESTING THAT THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON CITY, COUNTY, AND LOCAL  
4 AFFAIRS CONDUCT AN INTERIM STUDY REGARDING THE FINANCIAL  
5 CONDITION OF THE DISTRICT COURT SYSTEM, SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO  
6 THE CITIES AND COUNTIES SUPPORTING THOSE COURTS, INCLUDING  
7 WITHOUT LIMITATION DISTRICT COURT FUNDING, OPERATIONAL COSTS,  
8 COURT COSTS, FEES, FINES, AND THE LOCAL REVENUE STREAM TO THE  
9 STATE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE FUND.

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11 WHEREAS, with the passage of Amendment 80 to the Arkansas Constitution  
12 municipal courts became obsolete and a new third tier to the state's court  
13 system was created, becoming known as the "district court system"; and  
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15 WHEREAS, the district court system has gone through substantial changes  
16 over the past decade, including without limitation increased jurisdiction,  
17 many district court judges becoming state employees, and the establishment of  
18 a district court judges' retirement system; and  
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20 WHEREAS, the establishment of uniform court costs as well as the  
21 substantial increase in those costs over the years has primarily benefitted  
22 many state agencies and departments while doing little to nothing to assist  
23 local government; and  
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25 WHEREAS, additional fees and fines have also been put into effect that,  
26 along with court costs, have had a crippling effect on local governments'  
27 ability to collect fine revenue and operate the courts; and  
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29 WHEREAS, despite these many legislative changes local government  
30 continues to be required to pay the vast majority of the operational costs of  
31 district courts, including without limitation salaries, benefits, buildings,  
32 computers, and utilities while suffering from a depleted revenue stream to  
33 fund the courts,  
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35 NOW THEREFORE,  
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1 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON CITY, COUNTY, AND LOCAL AFFAIRS OF  
2 THE NINETIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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4 THAT the Senate Committee on City, County, and Local Affairs conduct an  
5 interim study regarding the financial condition of the district court system,  
6 specifically related to the cities and counties supporting those courts,  
7 including without limitation district court funding, operational costs, court  
8 costs, fees, fines, and the local revenue stream to the State Administration  
9 of Justice Fund.

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11 Respectfully submitted,

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15 Senator Missy Irvin  
16 District 18

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19 By: BPG/LNS  
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