

First Regular Session  
Seventy-second General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 19-0974.01 Jerry Barry x4341

**SENATE BILL 19-187**

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**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**Lee and Gardner,**

**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**(None),**

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**Senate Committees**  
Judiciary

**House Committees**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

**101 CONCERNING COMMISSIONS ON JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE.**

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**Bill Summary**

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)*

Currently, senior judges are evaluated by the state commission on judicial performance. The bill repeals this provision and makes conforming amendments.

Under current law, for a vacancy on a state or district commission on judicial performance, if the appointing authority does not appoint a replacement within 45 days after the vacancy arises, the governor appoints a replacement member of the commission. The bill changes this from the governor to the state commission.

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
*Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.*  
*Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

The bill clarifies language concerning persons who are offered surveys and repeals mention of specific groups for whom the judicial department does not have the information to send the surveys electronically.

For rules of the state commission on judicial performance, the bill clarifies that they may provide for a matrix or scorecard to evaluate a judge or justice and repeals the requirement that the rules contain a threshold for deciding whether a judge or justice meets a performance standard.

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1       *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2           **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 13-5.5-101, **amend**  
3        (1)(b), (1)(c), (2)(a), and (2)(b) as follows:

4           **13-5.5-101. Legislative declaration.** (1) It is the intent of the  
5        general assembly to provide:

6           (b) Information to the people of Colorado regarding the  
7        performance of judges AND justices ~~and senior judges~~ throughout the  
8        state; and

9           (c) Transparency and accountability for judges AND justices ~~and~~  
10        senior judges throughout the state of Colorado.

11           (2) Therefore, the general assembly finds and declares that it is in  
12        the public interest and is a matter of statewide concern to:

13           (a) Provide judges AND justices ~~and senior judges~~ with useful  
14        information concerning their own performances, along with training  
15        resources to improve judicial performance as necessary;

16           (b) Establish a comprehensive system of evaluating judicial  
17        performance to provide persons voting on the retention of judges AND  
18        justices ~~and senior judges~~ with fair, responsible, and constructive  
19        information about individual judicial performance;

20           **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 13-5.5-102, **amend**

1 (9); and **repeal** (13) as follows:

2       **13-5.5-102. Definitions.** As used in this article 5.5, unless the  
3 context otherwise requires:

4       (9) "Judge" includes all active ~~and senior~~ judges. ~~as defined in~~  
5 ~~subsection (13) of this section.~~

6       (13) "~~Senior judge~~" means a ~~retired judge who has returned to~~  
7 ~~temporary judicial duties pursuant to section 24-51-1105.~~

8       **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 13-5.5-104, **amend**  
9 (5)(b) as follows:

10       **13-5.5-104. State commission on judicial performance -**  
11 **district commissions on judicial performance - established -**  
12 **membership - terms - immunity - conflicts - repeal.** (5) (b) The  
13 original appointing authority shall fill any vacancy on a commission, but  
14 a commissioner shall not serve more than two full terms including any  
15 balance remaining on an unexpired term if the initial appointment was to  
16 fill a vacancy. Within five days after a vacancy arises on a commission,  
17 the commission with the vacancy shall notify the original appointing  
18 authority of the vacancy. The original appointing authority shall make an  
19 appointment within forty-five days after the date of the vacancy. If the  
20 original appointing authority fails to make the appointment within  
21 forty-five days after the date of the vacancy, the ~~governor~~ STATE  
22 COMMISSION shall make the appointment.

23       **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 13-5.5-105, **amend**  
24 (2)(d)(I), (2)(d)(III), and (2)(h)(II) as follows:

25       **13-5.5-105. Powers and duties of the state and district**  
26 **commissions - rules.** (2) In addition to other powers conferred and  
27 duties imposed upon the state commission by this article 5.5 and section

1 13-5.5-106, the state commission has the following powers and duties:

2 (d) (I) To develop surveys ~~for persons affected by~~ TO EVALUATE  
3 THE PERFORMANCE OF justices and judges, WHICH SURVEYS ARE  
4 COMPLETED BY INDIVIDUALS WHO INTERACT WITH THE COURT, including  
5 but not limited to attorneys, jurors, ~~represented and unrepresented~~  
6 litigants; ~~law enforcement personnel~~; attorneys within the district  
7 attorneys' and public defenders' offices, employees of the court, court  
8 interpreters, employees of probation offices, AND employees of local  
9 departments of social services; ~~and victims of crimes, as defined in~~  
10 ~~section 24-4.1-302 (5)~~;

11 (III) To develop rules, guidelines, and procedures to provide  
12 ~~attorneys, pro se litigants, and clients~~ CITIZENS with accessible and timely  
13 opportunities to review the surveys developed pursuant to this subsection  
14 (2)(d); and

15 (h) To promulgate rules pursuant to section 13-5.5-106  
16 concerning:

17 (II) The creation of a standards matrix OR SCORECARD related to  
18 the performance evaluation criteria set forth in section 13-5.5-107; ~~and a~~  
19 ~~clear description of the thresholds for the recommendations of "meets~~  
20 ~~performance standard" or "does not meet performance standard" and how~~  
21 ~~that information will be made available to the public~~; and

22 **SECTION 5.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, ~~repeal~~ 13-5.5-111 as  
23 follows:

24 **13-5.5-111. Judicial performance evaluations - senior judges.**

25 ~~(1) Every third year following the initial appointment of a senior judge~~  
26 ~~to the bench through a contract pursuant to section 24-51-1105, the state~~  
27 ~~commission shall conduct a performance evaluation of the senior judge~~

1 based on the judicial performance evaluation criteria set forth in section  
2 13-5.5-107. The state commission shall complete the performance  
3 evaluation of such senior judge and communicate the related narrative to  
4 the chief justice no later than forty-five days prior to the expiration of the  
5 senior judge's contract for that year. The narrative must include an  
6 assessment of the senior judge's strengths and weaknesses with respect to  
7 the judicial performance evaluation criteria set forth in section  
8 13-5.5-107.

9 (2) The state commission shall make a recommendation to the  
10 chief justice of the Colorado supreme court regarding the senior judge's  
11 performance. The recommendations must be stated as "meets  
12 performance standard" or "does not meet performance standard".

13 **SECTION 6. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act  
14 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the  
15 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August  
16 2, 2019, if adjournment sine die is on May 3, 2019); except that, if a  
17 referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the  
18 state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act  
19 within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect  
20 unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in  
21 November 2020 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the  
22 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.