

REVISED

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS31982 / S1029

This bill would add a new district judge position in the Seventh Judicial District to be chambered in Bonneville County. The Seventh Judicial District, which is comprised of ten (10) counties covering more than 20,000 square miles, is the largest judicial district in Idaho. It is also the third most populous judicial district in the state and has seen a 22% population increase over ten (10) years. All of the district judges in the district travel to cover cases in counties other than the county in which they are chambered, and four (4) district judges chambered elsewhere in the district handle regular calendars in Bonneville County. Based upon regular calendars, and not including travel for trials, it is estimated the six (6) current district judges expend more than 51 days of drive time each year in order to cover cases throughout the district. In addition, all six (6) of the current district judges preside over a treatment court and four (4) of those district judges travel to other counties for those proceedings. Finally, Bonneville County is the medical hub of eastern Idaho, with two (2) major hospitals and multiple specialist doctors in Idaho Falls. As a result, the district judges in Bonneville County handle a significant number of highly complex and intensely litigated medical malpractice cases. The Seventh Judicial District's significant population growth, along with the unique demands of this large district consisting of both small and large counties, necessitate that an additional district judge chambered in Bonneville County is needed to provide timely and fair access to the public and increase the efficient allocation of court resources.

## FISCAL NOTE

The cost for Fiscal Year 2026, including salary and benefits for the district judge position and other costs, including the salary and benefits for a court reporter as required by section 1-1101, Idaho Code, will total approximately \$408,100 in general funds.

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**DISCLAIMER:** This statement of purpose and fiscal note are a mere attachment to this bill and prepared by a proponent of the bill. It is neither intended as an expression of legislative intent nor intended for any use outside of the legislative process, including judicial review (Joint Rule 18).