

State of Arkansas
94th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2023

A Bill

SENATE BILL 373

By: Senator Caldwell
By: Representative J. Moore

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT CONCERNING THE REORGANIZATION OF LOCAL DISTRICT COURTS TO CREATE THE SIXTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE STATE DISTRICT COURT SYSTEM; TO ADD AN ADDITIONAL JUDGESHIP TO THE SIXTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE STATE DISTRICT COURT SYSTEM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

CONCERNING THE REORGANIZATION OF LOCAL DISTRICT COURTS TO CREATE THE SIXTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE STATE DISTRICT COURT SYSTEM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 16-17-904 is repealed.

~~16-17-904. Arkansas County District Courts.~~

~~(a) Arkansas County shall have the following district courts and judges:~~

~~(1) The Northern District shall have:~~

~~(A) One (1) district court located in Stuttgart; and~~

~~(B) One (1) district judge; and~~

~~(2)(A) The Southern District shall have one (1) district court with three (3) departments:~~

~~(i) One (1) located in DeWitt;~~

~~(ii) One (1) located in Gillett; and~~



~~(iii) One (1) located in St. Charles.~~

~~(B) All three (3) departments are to be served by one (1) judge.~~

~~(b) The judge of any district court located in Arkansas County shall be elected by the electors of the judicial district in which the court is located.~~

~~(c) In Arkansas County, the jurisdiction of the district court shall be limited to the judicial district in which the court is located.~~

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 16-17-915 is repealed.

~~16-17-915. Monroe County District Court.~~

~~(a)(1) Monroe County shall have one (1) district court with three (3) departments as follows:~~

~~(A) One (1) located in Brinkley;~~

~~(B) One (1) located in Clarendon; and~~

~~(C) One (1) located in Holly Grove.~~

~~(2)(A) The department in Brinkley is to be served by one (1) judge.~~

~~(B) The two (2) departments in Clarendon and Holly Grove are to be served by one (1) judge.~~

~~(b) The judges of the Monroe County District Court shall be elected countywide.~~

~~(c) The Monroe County District Court shall have countywide jurisdiction.~~

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 16-17-1115(a)(2), concerning the reorganization of local district courts to state district courts, is amended to read as follows:

(2) The new state district court ~~judgeship~~ judgeships created by this section shall become effective January 1, 2025, and shall be placed on the ballot to be elected in the 2024 nonpartisan judicial election from the newly constructed state district court ~~district~~ districts.

SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 16-17-1115(c), concerning the Sixteenth District of the state district court system, is amended to read as follows:

(c)(1) The Sixteenth Judicial District shall be composed of the

counties of Monroe and Arkansas.

(2) The Sixteenth Judicial District shall have seven (7) departments as follows:

- (A) One (1) located in Stuttgart;
- (B) One (1) located in ~~De Witt~~ DeWitt;
- (C) One (1) located in Gillett;
- (D) One (1) located in St. Charles;
- (E) One (1) located in Brinkley;
- (F) One (1) located in Clarendon; and
- (G) One (1) located in Holly Grove.

(3)~~(A)~~ The Sixteenth Judicial District shall be served by ~~one~~ ~~(1)~~ two (2) state district court ~~judge~~ judges.

(B) One (1) judgeship shall be designated as Division 1 and one (1) judgeship shall be designated as Division 2.

(4) The assignment of judges to departments under subdivision (c)(2) of this section shall be determined by the mutual agreement of the state district court judges of the Sixteenth Judicial District.

~~(4)~~(5) The Sixteenth Judicial District ~~judge~~ judges shall be elected districtwide.

~~(5)~~(6) The Sixteenth Judicial District court shall have districtwide jurisdiction.

SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE. Sections 1 and 2 of this act are effective on January 1, 2025.

APPROVED: 4/11/23