

One Hundred Second Legislature - First Session - 2011

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB451

Chairperson: Senator Brad Ashford

Committee: Judiciary

Date of Hearing: February 11, 2011

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

Legislative Bill 451 would enact the following provisions to increase flexibility for the Judiciary to administer justice:

- Expand the Supreme Court's options for funding sources from which to compensate interpreters used by the courts.
- Delay the establishment of an eighth judgeship in the Lancaster County District Court from July 1, 2011 to July 1, 2012. The judgeship was passed into law under LB 35 in 2009.
- Provide for clerks of the district courts to assist clerks of the county courts in the provision of court services when the county court staff is unavailable.
- Provide for the new position of Judicial Hearing Officer. The bill would authorize the Supreme Court to appoint one or more judicial hearing officer(s) in each district and county judicial district or separate juvenile court to preside in, hear and determine certain cases including: misdemeanors; traffic violations; juvenile cases; noncontested estate, inheritance tax and guardianship and conservatorship matters; small claims actions and uncontested divorce matters.
- Provide for more flexibility in determining when court offices must be open.
- Allow for a divorce decree to be entered without a hearing if: both parties waive the hearing requirement; both parties certify in writing that the marriage is irretrievably broken; at least one of the parties that reasonable efforts at reconciliation have been made and both parties have signed an agreement resolving all issues of the divorce.
- Outright repeal of § 24-512 which provides for a county court to be at a location other than the county seat and requires cases to be filed with the county court clerk in the county seat.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Brad Ashford