OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7255 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING JUDICIAL BRANCH OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES AND THE DUTIES OF JUDICIAL BRANCH PERSONNEL.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

§ 18 — ELECTRONIC STALKING AND CRIMINAL PROTECTIVE ORDER

Expands the criminal protective order protection to victims of electronic stalking by allowing a court to issue such an order against someone arrested for that crime

§§ 21 & 22 — OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES

Allows crime victims to make a statement to the prosecutor and the court on any plea agreement; allows victim notifications to be sent electronically to those who request it and provide their email address to OVS; maintains the use of U.S. mail as an option

§ 23 — REMOTE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Adds the execution of an agreement as to the division of an estate to the list of records that cannot be remotely acknowledged

§ 24 — TASK FORCE TO REVIEW HABEAS CORPUS PROCEEDINGS

Establishes a 13-member task force to review the habeas corpus procedures used by the federal government and other states; requires it to report findings and recommendations to the Judiciary Committee by January 15, 2027

§ 25 — COERCED DEBT LIABILITY

Changes the lookback period for debt to be eligible to be waived as coerced debt, by requiring that the debt be less than 10 years old rather than more than 10 years old

§ 26 — MONEY JUDGMENT ENFORCEMENT

Adds provisions for an action to enforce a money judgment by foreclosure of a real property lien

§§ 27 & 28 — PROBATION PERIOD FOR ANIMAL CRUELTY CONVICTION

Establishes a five-year probation period for an offender convicted of animal cruelty

§§ 29 & 30 — CIVIL PROCESS AND COMMERCIAL WAIVERS

Addresses return of process for prejudgment remedy for certain commercial waivers

§§ 31-33 — CONSULTANT SERVICE CONTRACTS FOR JUDICIAL BRANCH CAPITAL PROJECTS

Allows the chief court administrator to contract for consultant services for certain capital projects if the estimated cost for the services is $300,000 or less

§ 34 —CHIEF COURT ADMINISTRATOR DUTIES

Increases, from $1.25 million to $3million, the cap on construction contracts the chief court administrator may plan, execute, oversee, and supervise

SUMMARY

This bill makes various unrelated changes in laws on court procedures and operations.

It also makes minor, technical, and conforming changes.

A section-by-section analysis appears below.

*House Amendment "A" (1) modifies the Office of Information Privacy (OIP) that the underlying bill creates, such as authorizing, rather than requiring, the office to take certain steps and clarifying that its provisions do not apply to certain Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) records; (2) modifies the court venues for certain towns for varying civil processes; (3) establishes a 13-member task force to review habeas corpus procedures, instead of requiring the sentencing commission to do so as in the underlying bill; and (4) adds the judicial branch consultant service contract-related provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, unless stated otherwise below.

§ 1 — OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRIVACY

Establishes the OIP within the judicial branch and authorizes it to take steps, upon request, to direct a public agency to remove a protected person's (e.g., a judge) personal information from the agency's website or not publish it

OIP Established Purpose

The bill establishes the Office of Information Privacy (OIP) within the judicial branch and authorizes it to direct a public agency, upon the request of a protected individual, to remove any specific personal information from the agency's website, including a social media or social network, or not publish it.

Protected Individuals. The bill categorizes the following persons as protected individuals:

1. justices, judges, or senior judges;
2. state referees;
3. family support magistrates and family support referees; and
4. the spouse, children, or dependents who live in the same household as someone listed above.

Personal Information. Under the bill, "personal information" is the individual's:

1. home address or telephone number;

2. mobile telephone number or personal email address;

3. Social Security number or federal tax identification number;

4. driver's license number, license plate number, or unique vehicle identifier; or

5. birth or marital record or children's names.

It does not include information that has been publicly displayed that the protected individual has not requested to be removed, or information that is related to and part of a news story, commentary, editorial, or other speech on a matter of public concern.

Public Agency. For OIP's authority under the bill, a "public agency" or "agency" is any:

1. executive, administrative, or legislative office of the state or any of its political subdivisions, and any agency, department, institution, bureau, board, commission, authority, or official of the state or of any city, town, borough, municipal corporation, school district, regional district, or other district or other political subdivision of the state, including a committee of, or created by it, and any judicial office (e.g., the Division of Public Defender Services), official, or body or committee of it, but only for its or their administrative functions;

2. person to the extent the person is deemed to be the functional equivalent of a public agency according to law; or

3. "implementing agency," which includes one of the following agencies designated by a municipality under the Economic Development and Manufacturing Assistance Act: (a) an economic development commission, redevelopment agency, sewer authority or sewer commission, public works commission, water authority or water commission, port authority or port commission, harbor authority or harbor commission, or parking authority or parking commission; (b) a nonprofit development corporation; or (c) any other agency designated and authorized

by a municipality to undertake a project and approved by the economic and community development commissioner.

OIP's Powers and Duties

The bill establishes OIP's powers and duties and specifies the steps that the office must take in carrying out its duties as follows, based on whether the information has already been published or not.

Personal Information Published. Under the bill, if the personal information has already been published, the office may take the steps outlined below:

1. certify that an individual making the request is a protected individual;

2. work with the protected individual to identify the specific personal information that they want removed, including the exact website address where the content appears, if available, and, if the personal information is a land record, the volume and page number where it is recorded and each succeeding page number within a document that contains personal information that needs to be redacted; and

3. after certifying that a requestor is a protected individual, (a) provide the public agency with the specific personal information to be removed, including the exact website address where the content appears, if available, and, if it is a land record, the record's exact website address as it appears on the website, if available, and the volume and page number where it is recorded and each succeeding page number within a document that contains personal information that needs to be redacted, and (b) direct that the personal information be removed as soon as practicable.

Personal Information Not Yet Published. If the personal information has not yet been published, the office must do the following:

1. certify the individual is a protected individual;

2. work with the protected individual to identify the specific personal information that the individual does not want to be published, including the volume and page number and each succeeding page number within a document that contains personal information that needs to be redacted, if the personal information is recorded in a land record; and

3. after certifying that the requestor is a protected individual, provide the public agency with the specific personal information that the individual does not want to be published, including the volume and page number and each succeeding page number within a document that contains personal information that needs to be redacted, if the personal information is recorded in a land record.

Loss of Protected Status. The office must inform the public agency whenever a previously certified protected individual no longer meets the definition of a protected individual and is no longer eligible to (1) have personal information removed from the agency's website or (2) request that the agency not publish personal information.

Public Agency's Response to Request

Upon receiving OIP's request, the public agency must promptly acknowledge receipt of the request by email and:

1. take steps reasonably necessary to ensure that any specific personal information identified by the protected individual is not published or

2. if the specific personal information is already published, remove it as quickly as practicable after receiving the request.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

The bill specifies that it does not require the removal or redaction of personal information in records that must be published under FOIA, such as agendas, minutes, videos, or transcripts of public meetings.

Civil Liability Protection

The bill provides immunity from civil liability for public agency employees whose failure to remove a protected person's personal information as requested causes damages or injuries. The liability protection applies if the employee acted in good faith.

Good Faith. Under the bill, an employee is deemed to have acted in good faith if he or she (1) reasonably believed that their actions complied with applicable laws on protecting personal information and (2) did not engage in gross negligence, willful misconduct, or intentional wrongdoing.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2026

§§ 2, 6, 7, 10, 19 & 20 — DCF AND CSSD INFORMATION SHARING

Allows CSSD and DCF to share information on juveniles who have been in both systems

DCF's Confidential Records (§ 2)

By law, records maintained by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) must be confidential and not be disclosed, unless the department receives written consent from the person or as provided under certain laws. The law makes exceptions that allow disclosure to certain entities for limited purposes (CGS § 17a-28(g)).

Under current law, the judicial branch's Court Support Services Division (CSSD) has limited access to DCF's information to (1) make certain determinations (e.g., whether the child or youth has been committed to DCF's custody as a delinquent) and (2) share common case records to track juvenile offender recidivism.

The bill instead allows DCF to disclose information on a child, youth, or any other person to CSSD so the division may determine supervision and treatment needs and track juvenile recidivism. The bill removes the limitations on the purposes for which the information may be disclosed.

Confidential Records in Juvenile Matters (§ 6)

By law, all records in juvenile matters, with certain exceptions (e.g., delinquency proceedings) are confidential and are generally not open to

inspection or disclosure to any third party unless ordered by the Superior Court (CGS § 46b-124(b)). The law allows the judicial branch to make records in delinquency proceedings available to certain people and government entities, such as DCF and the Department of Correction (DOC).

DCF. Under current law, if the child is under DCF's oversight, CSSD may generally disclose information to DCF to identify that the child is, among other things, committed by a court into DCF's custody due to being uncared for, abused, or neglected.

The bill instead allows disclosure to identify if the child is receiving services from DCF. Under the bill and existing law, this disclosure of delinquency proceeding records is limited to when DCF is providing services to the child.

DOC. Under current law, records of delinquency proceedings of a person who has been convicted of a crime in adult court may be disclosed to DOC and Board of Pardons and Paroles employees and members who need the records to do risk assessments to determine suitability for release from incarceration. The bill expands this by allowing disclosure of records for subjects who have been charged with a crime, not only for those convicted. Relatedly, it also allows disclosure of records for risk assessments to determine release from DOC custody, instead of incarceration.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

Custody Order Central Computer System (§ 7)

Under current law, information on a child who is the subject of a custody order or other process entered into the judicial branch's central computer system may be disclosed to DCF, if the information is limited to a child who was committed by a court into DCF's custody because they were uncared for, abused, or neglected. The bill instead allows this disclosure if the child is receiving services from DCF.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

Automated Registry of Protective Orders (§ 10)

By law, information in the judicial branch's automated registry of protective orders is not subject to disclosure, but the law allows the chief court administrator to grant access to the information to the personnel of certain agencies, including the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection and the Board of Pardons and Paroles. The bill now allows the chief court administrator to also grant access to information on the protective order registry to DCF.

CSSD Information, Files, and Reports (§ 19)

By law, CSSD must establish written procedures for the release of information from the division's reports and files.

Current law allows access to (1) nonidentifying information by certain persons for research related to the administration of criminal justice, (2) all information provided to CSSD by probation officers for compiling presentence reports, and (3) all information provided to CSSD on convicted persons in DOC's custody.

The bill additionally allows access to information on any person in DCF's custody if the person's conditions of release require cooperating with the department.

Youthful Offender Confidential Records and Information (§ 20)

Generally, under the law, when a juvenile matter is transferred to adult criminal court, certain juvenile offenders may qualify for youthful offender status, which provides more confidentiality of his or her records (CGS § 54-76*l*).

Under current law, the records may be disclosed to DCF if the child is under the oversight of the department's administrative unit and the disclosure is limited to information that identifies the child as residing in a justice facility or incarcerated. The bill allows disclosure to DCF without these conditions.

§ 3 — BOARD OF FIREARMS PERMIT EXAMINERS

Reduces the membership of the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners from nine to eight by removing the retired Superior Court judge appointee

The bill reduces the membership of the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners from nine to eight. It does so by removing the retired Superior Court judge, who is appointed by the chief court administrator under current law.

By law, anyone aggrieved by an adverse action on a long gun eligibility certificate or application, including any limitation or revocation, may appeal to the board, following statutory procedures for appealing decisions on existing gun credentials.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§ 4 — UCC FALSE RECORDS

Makes permissive the Superior Court's hearing and reviewing of certain petitions to invalidate false records filed under the Uniform Commercial Code for secured transactions

By law, when a record was falsely filed or amended under the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) for secured transactions, a person identified in the record may petition the court to invalidate the record. The court must review the petition and determine whether cause exists to doubt the record's validity.

Under current law, if the court determines that cause exists, the court must hold a hearing to determine whether to invalidate the record or grant any other relief deemed appropriate. The bill instead makes this hearing permissive, so the court is not required to hold it. If the court holds a hearing it must do so within 60 days after cause was determined, as under current law.

Relatedly, the bill also specifies that the court's finding may be made solely on a review of the documentation attached to the petition and the responses, if any, of the person named as a secured party in the financing statement record and without hearing any oral testimony if the secured party offers none.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§ 5 — DOMESTIC RELATIONS OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

Makes a minor conforming change for consistency with other statutory references

The bill makes a minor conforming change in the statutes on family relations, by changing the term "domestic relations officers" to "domestic relations personnel" for consistency with other references.

§§ 8 & 9 — APPEAL OF SUMMARY PROCESS JUDGEMENT

Clarifies that the Superior Court orders the amount a tenant must pay the court for rent that accrues during the pendency of an appeal of a judgement and that it is not a bond

By law, in a summary process (eviction) when the court has issued a judgment, the tenant may appeal. The law allows the court to order an amount, instead of a bond, that the defendant-tenant must make as a deposit with the court as a reasonable fair rent value for the use and occupancy of the premises while the appeal is pending.

The bill clarifies that it is the Superior Court that determines how much the defendant must pay (§ 9).

It also removes a reference to an obsolete bond requirement (§ 8).

§§ 11-13 & 17 — "STA-FED, ADR, INC."

Eliminates reference in certain statutes to the name of a nonprofit organization that used to oversee alternative dispute resolutions

The bill eliminates obsolete references in statutes to the organization, STA-FED ADR, Inc., that used to oversee alternative dispute resolutions in Connecticut.

PA 93-108 established STA-FED ADR, Inc., as a nonprofit, private corporation to oversee an alternative dispute resolution program that used state and federal senior judges and judge referees to resolve civil disputes referred by the state and federal court systems. This organization no longer exists.

§ 14 — MOTION TO FILE A LATE APPEAL

Allows the state Supreme Court to review the Connecticut Appellate Court's decision to deny a motion to file a late appeal

Under existing law, there is no right to further review after the state Appellate Court's final determination of an appeal, except that the Connecticut Supreme Court has the power to certify cases for its review either (1) upon petition by an aggrieved party or (2) by the appellate

panel that heard the matter.

The bill also allows the Connecticut Supreme Court to review the state Appellate Court's decision to deny a motion to file a late appeal.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§§ 15 & 16 — COURT VENUE AND SERVICE OF PROCESS

For establishing venue and where civil process should be returnable, makes changes to the judicial districts of Hartford, Litchfield, and New Britain

Venue (§ 15)

For establishing venue (i.e. where a case will be heard), the Superior Court is divided into judicial districts.

The bill removes five towns (Avon, Canton, Farmington, Granby, and Simsbury) from the Hartford judicial district and one town from the New Britain district (Burlington), and it adds all six of them to the Litchfield judicial district.

Service of Process (§ 16)

The bill changes some of the options for where process should be returned. Generally, it eliminates the options under current law that give the plaintiff the choice between the Hartford or New Britain judicial district when the action involves the towns of Avon or Simsbury. Instead, it gives the plaintiff in these cases the choice between the Hartford or Litchfield judicial district.

Specifically, under the bill this pertains to a civil action:

1. in which either party lives in Avon or Simsbury;

2. that involves land, and the land and either party are located in Avon or Simsbury;

3. in which the plaintiff is a domestic business organization and has an office or a place of business in Avon or Simsbury; or

4. that involves a housing matter, and the premises is located in Avon and Simsbury.

The bill also eliminates the options under current law that give the plaintiff the choice between the Hartford or New Britain judicial district when the action involves the towns of Canton or Farmington. Instead, under the bill, for civil actions involving either Canton or Farmington process must be returned to the judicial district where the town is located, which is Litchfield judicial district under the bill.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

§ 18 — ELECTRONIC STALKING AND CRIMINAL PROTECTIVE ORDER

Expands the criminal protective order protection to victims of electronic stalking by allowing a court to issue such an order against someone arrested for that crime

By law, upon arrest for certain crimes, the court may issue a criminal protective order against the offender. Under existing law, an arrest for any of the following violations, or an attempt to commit them, subjects the offender to a criminal protective order at the court's discretion: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th degree sexual assault; 3rd degree sexual assault with a firearm; 1st degree aggravated sexual assault; aggravated sexual assault of a minor; and certain violations of injury or risk of injury to, or impairing morals of children. A person who is arrested for a violation of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd degree stalking may also be issued a criminal protective order by the court.

The bill also allows the court to issue a criminal protective order against someone arrested for the crime of electronic stalking, which is a class D felony punishable by a fine up to $5,000, up to five years in prison, or both.

By law, a criminal protective order may include provisions necessary to protect the victim from threats, harassment, injury, or intimidation by the defendant, including an order enjoining the defendant from (1) imposing any restraint on the person or liberty of the victim; (2) threatening, harassing, assaulting, molesting, or sexually assaulting the victim; or (3) entering the victim's home. It may also protect an animal (CGS § 54-1k(b)).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

§§ 21 & 22 — OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES

Allows crime victims to make a statement to the prosecutor and the court on any plea agreement; allows victim notifications to be sent electronically to those who request it and provide their email address to OVS; maintains the use of U.S. mail as an option

Victim Statement (§ 21)

By law, the Office of Victim Services (OVS) must give victims a list of specified information within 10 days after receiving their application for victim compensation.

Under current law, among other things, this list must inform victims of their right to present a statement of their losses, injuries, and wishes to the prosecutor and the court before the court accepts a plea of guilty or nolo contendere made under a plea agreement in which the defendant pleads to a lesser offense than that with which he or she was originally charged.

Under the bill, OVS's list no longer needs to specify to the victim that they can make the statement if the defendant pleads to a lesser offense. The bill allows the victim to make a statement on any plea agreement.

Victim Notification (§ 22)

By law, if a victim or other person (i.e. registrant) requests it, OVS must notify them when certain things happen related to the incarcerated person. Under existing law this applies when the person (1) applies for release or sentence reduction or review, (2) files an application with the court to be exempt from registering for committing an offense against a minor or a nonviolent sexual offense, or (3) is scheduled for release.

Under current law, this notice must be sent via mail. Under the bill, the notice must be sent either by first class mail or electronically, whichever the registrant chooses. The bill also requires victims to notify the office of their email address if the electronic notification is requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

§ 23 — REMOTE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Adds the execution of an agreement as to the division of an estate to the list of records that cannot be remotely acknowledged

Under existing law, no record can be acknowledged remotely in the following circumstances: the making and execution of a will, codicil, trust, or trust instrument; the execution of certain health care instructions; the execution of a designation of a standby guardian; the execution of a living will; the execution of a power of attorney; the execution of a self-proving affidavit for an appointment of a health care representative or for a living will; the execution of a mutual distribution agreement; the execution of a disclaimer; or a real estate closing.

The bill adds the execution of an agreement as to the division of an estate to the list of records that cannot be remotely acknowledged.

The bill also makes a technical change in the statutes on remote acknowledgement of documents by changing the term "document" to "records" for consistency with other references.

§ 24 — TASK FORCE TO REVIEW HABEAS CORPUS PROCEEDINGS

Establishes a 13-member task force to review the habeas corpus procedures used by the federal government and other states; requires it to report findings and recommendations to the Judiciary Committee by January 15, 2027

Purpose and Required Recommendations

The bill establishes a 13-member task force to review the habeas corpus procedures used by the federal government and other states and make recommendations to the General Assembly, including best practices that could be implemented in Connecticut to:

1. ensure a timely review and adjudication of habeas corpus claims,

2. establish standards for the presentation of repeated habeas corpus claims associated with the same incident,

3. prioritize credible habeas corpus claims and limit the filing of repetitive or meritless habeas corpus claims, and

4. achieve balance between providing public counsel in habeas corpus claims and the cost of litigating repetitive or meritless claims.

Members and Appointments

Under the bill, the six legislative leaders and the four Judiciary Committee leaders must each appoint one member. The appointments must be made within 30 days after the bill passes and the appointing authorities must fill any vacancies.

The chief court administrator, chief public defender, and chief state's attorney, or their designees, must also serve as task force members.

The House speaker and the Senate president pro tempore must select the chairpersons from among the taskforce members and the chairpersons must schedule and hold the first meeting within 60 days after the bill passes.

Administrative Staff

The chief court administrator must designate judicial branch employees to serve as the task force's administrative staff.

Reporting

By January 1, 2027, the task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Judiciary Committee. It terminates when it submits the report or January 1, 2027, whichever is later.

§ 25 — COERCED DEBT LIABILITY

Changes the lookback period for debt to be eligible to be waived as coerced debt, by requiring that the debt be less than 10 years old rather than more than 10 years old

By law, coerced debt is any debt incurred in the name of a debtor who is a victim of domestic violence when the debt was incurred in response to any duress, intimidation, threat of force, force, or undue influence used to specifically coerce the debtor into incurring the debt. The law prohibits anyone from knowingly causing another person to incur coerced debt and subjects any violator to civil liability.

Under current law, "debt" means an unsecured credit card debt, or any portion of one, incurred on or after January 1, 2025, for personal, family, or household use that (1) was not subject to a final judgment in an action for dissolution of marriage or collection matter that occurred prior to the time when a debtor requests that the claimant waive the debt

or (2) was incurred more than 10 years before the date of the request.

The bill changes the lookback period for when the debt could have been incurred for purposes of existing law's provisions on the collection of coerced debt. Specifically, it requires that the debt be less than 10 years old rather than more than 10 years old.

§ 26 — MONEY JUDGMENT ENFORCEMENT

Adds provisions for an action to enforce a money judgment by foreclosure of a real property lien

By law, a money judgment may generally be enforced against any property of the judgment debtor unless the property is exempt from application to the satisfaction of the judgment under state or federal law.

The bill adds provisions for an action to enforce a money judgment by foreclosure of a real property lien. In such a case, under the bill, the amount of the judgment lien to attach to the property must be calculated by taking the fair market value of the property, less any priority liens and the amount of any applicable exempt property under state law.

The bill requires the chief court administrator to ensure that any form prescribed by the judicial branch relating to an action to enforce a money judgment by foreclosure of a real property lien, including the foreclosure worksheet, includes the property not subject to debt collection under the laws on exempt property and exempt property of farm partnership.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§§ 27 & 28 — PROBATION PERIOD FOR ANIMAL CRUELTY CONVICTION

Establishes a five-year probation period for an offender convicted of animal cruelty

The probation period for offenders convicted of certain crimes, including certain sexual assault crimes, is set in law. Under current law, the probation period cannot be less than 10 years or more than 35 years, unless terminated sooner.

The bill adds conviction of animal cruelty to the list of crimes for which the law provides a probation period. It establishes five years as

the probation period for someone convicted of animal cruelty (§ 27).

It also makes a conforming change (§ 28).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

§§ 29 & 30 — CIVIL PROCESS AND COMMERCIAL WAIVERS

Addresses return of process for prejudgment remedy for certain commercial waivers

Commercial Waivers (§ 29)

The bill provides that in commercial transactions when a defendant has waived the right to notice and a hearing, the plaintiff's attorney must issue the writ for prejudgment remedy without a court order if, in addition to meeting requirements in existing law, the plaintiff's lawyer serves process of the complaint to be returned to the court:

1. within 12 days, inclusive, after the earlier of (a) service of process upon the defendant preventing the dissipation of property or (b) service of process upon any third person holding property of the defendant and

2. at least six days before the return date.

Process in Civil Actions (§ 30)

Under existing law, process in civil actions returnable to the state Supreme Court must be returned to its clerk at least 20 days before the return day and, if returnable to Superior Court (except process in evictions and petitions for parentage and support), to the clerk of the court at least six days before the return day.

The bill also exempts from the above process return time frames the commencement of any civil action containing the issuance of a prejudgment remedy when the defendant, in a commercial transaction, has waived notice and hearing as provided above.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

§§ 31-33 — CONSULTANT SERVICE CONTRACTS FOR JUDICIAL BRANCH CAPITAL PROJECTS

Allows the chief court administrator to contract for consultant services for certain capital projects if the estimated cost for the services is $300,000 or less

The bill allows the chief court administrator, or her designee, to:

1. compile a list of architects, professional engineers, and construction administrators to provide consultant services for a particular program involving various projects for constructing new buildings or renovating existing ones operated or controlled by the judicial branch and

2. enter into a contract with any of the professionals on the list for the consultant services when the service's estimated cost is $300,000 or less.

The bill also allows the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) commissioner to compile a list of these professionals for the judicial branch and enter into a consultant service contract with them.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

§ 34 —CHIEF COURT ADMINISTRATOR DUTIES

Increases, from $1.25 million to $3million, the cap on construction contracts the chief court administrator may plan, execute, oversee, and supervise

The law requires the chief court administrator to, among other things, supervise the care and control of all property where the Judicial Department is the primary occupant.

Under current law this includes planning, executing contracts, except for consultant services contracts, overseeing, and supervising work involving the construction, repair, or alteration of a building or premises under the chief court administrator's supervision, for construction contracts that are $1.25 million or less. The bill increases the chief court administrator's construction contract cap to $3 million. Also, as stated above, it allows the chief court administrator to execute consultant service contracts estimated at $300,000 or less.

Under existing law, unchanged by the bill, this does not include the probate courts, Division of Criminal Justice, and Public Defender Services Commission, except where they share facilities in state-

maintained courts.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 41 Nay 0 (04/04/2025)