



2025-2026 General Assembly

HOUSE BILL 377: 2026 Court Changes, Sec. 28: Allow Suspension of Trial Court Judges Pending Investigation

Analysis of: House Bill 377 (Ratified) , Sec. 28

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Section 28 of House Bill 377 would have modified laws regarding the Judicial Standards Commission to allow suspension of trial judges pending investigations into misconduct. A new definition of a "trial judge" would have been created and would include "any judge who is serving in the Superior Court Division or District Court Division of the General Court of Justice of North Carolina, including any retired justice or judge who is recalled for service as an emergency judge of the Superior Court Division or District Court Division of the General Court of Justice." A new procedure would then have been created that would allow a trial judge to be suspended if during the pendency of an investigation the Judicial Standards Commission found that immediate and irreparable injury, loss, or damage would result by the trial judge remaining in office.

House Bill 377 was ratified by the General Assembly on August 6, 2026, but was vetoed by the Governor on August 17th, 2026, and is not current law. If the General Assembly overrides the veto, Section 28 of House Bill 377 would become effective when it becomes law.

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