



# Senate Joint Resolution 113

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

Vote cast by the members of the 1977 Legislature on final passage:  
HOUSE [98 members]: Yeas, 84; Nays, 0; Absent or not voting, 14.  
SENATE [49 members]: Yeas, 36; Nays, 2; Absent or not voting, 11.

## Official Ballot Title:

Shall the legislature be authorized to grant district courts jurisdiction over cases involving more than \$1,000?

## The Law as it now exists:

At the present time the constitution grants the legislature the authority to grant district courts jurisdiction over cases involving property worth \$1,000 or less. Superior courts have original jurisdiction to all cases in which the amount in controversy amounts to over \$1,000.

## Statement for

### WHAT IT DOES

SJR 113 will authorize the legislature to grant to district courts (called justice of the peace in our State Constitution) the authority to hear lawsuits involving up to \$3,000. Right now the constitution limits them to matters in controversy up to \$1,000.

### WHY IT WILL HELP

The superior courts are extremely crowded, and it is expensive to handle a relatively small civil suit there. The district courts are qualified to hear these cases, and can decide them more quickly and efficiently. The result will be to reduce the superior court caseload a little, and thereby relieve some of the pressure on those courts. An even more noticeable benefit to the public will be earlier and shorter trials and speedier decisions in those smaller cases — and at less expense to the taxpayers!

### Voters' Pamphlet Statement Prepared by:

PETE FRANCIS, State Senator; FRANK L. SULLIVAN, Judge, Seattle District Court.

# The effect of SJR 113, if approved into Law:

This amendment would remove present constitutional limitations. It would allow the legislature to establish any dollar limit it felt appropriate on the jurisdiction of justice courts, and to grant superior courts jurisdiction over cases above that amount.

NOTE: The ballot title and explanatory statement were written by the Attorney General as required by state law. The complete text of Senate Joint Resolution 113 begins on Page 38.

State law requires that the argument and rebuttal statement against a constitutional amendment be written by one or more members of the State Legislature who voted against that proposed amendment on final passage or, in the event that no such member of the Legislature consents to prepare the statement, by any other responsible individual or individuals to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the State Senate, and the Secretary of State. No Legislator who voted against Senate Joint Resolution 113 or other individual opposing the measure consented to write an argument against the measure for publication in this pamphlet.

chapter. Decisions of the department, other than rule making, shall be subject to review in accordance with chapter 43.21B RCW.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 9. This chapter is exempted from the rule of strict construction and it shall be liberally construed to give full effect to the objectives and purposes for which it was enacted.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 10. If any provision of this act, or its application to any person, organization, or circumstance is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the act, or the application of the provision to other persons, organizations, or circumstances is not affected.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 11. Sections 1 through 10 of this act shall constitute a new chapter in Title 90 RCW.



COMPLETE TEXT OF

## Senate Joint Resolution 113

BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, IN LEGISLATIVE SESSION ASSEMBLED:

THAT, At the next general election to be held in this state there shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the state for their approval and ratification, or rejection, amendments to Article IV, section 6, and Article IV, section 10, of the Constitution of the state of Washington, so that said sections shall read as follows:

Article IV, section 6. The superior court shall have original jurisdiction in all cases in equity and in all cases at law which involve the title or possession of real property, or the legality of any tax, impost, assessment, toll, or municipal fine, and in all other cases in which the demand or the value of the property in controversy amounts to ~~((one))~~ three thousand dollars or as otherwise determined by law, or a lesser sum in excess of the jurisdiction granted to justices of the peace and other inferior courts, and in all criminal cases amounting to felony, and in all cases of misdemeanor not otherwise provided for by law; of actions of forcible entry and detainer; of proceedings in insolvency; of actions to prevent or abate a nuisance; of all matters of probate, of divorce, and for annulment of marriage; and for such special cases and proceedings as are not otherwise provided for. The superior court shall also have original jurisdiction in all cases and of all proceedings in which jurisdiction shall not have been by law vested exclusively in some other court; and said court shall have the power of naturalization and to issue papers therefor. They shall have such appellate jurisdiction in cases arising in justices' and other inferior courts in their respective counties as may be prescribed by law. They shall always be open, except on nonjudicial days, and their process shall extend to all parts of the state. Said courts and their judges shall have power to issue writs of mandamus, quo warranto, review, certiorari, prohibition, and writs of habeas corpus, on petition by or on behalf of any person in actual custody in their respective counties. Injunctions and writs of prohibition and of habeas corpus may be issued and served on legal holidays and nonjudicial days.

Article IV, section 10. The legislature shall determine the number of justices of the peace to be elected and shall prescribe by law the powers, duties and jurisdiction of justices of the peace: PROVIDED, That such jurisdiction granted by the legislature shall not trench upon the jurisdiction of superior or other courts of record, except that justices of the peace may be made police justices of incorporated cities and towns. Justices of the peace shall have original jurisdiction in cases where the demand or value of the property in controversy is less than three hundred dollars or such greater sum, not to exceed ~~((one))~~ three thousand dollars or as otherwise determined by law, as shall be prescribed by the legislature. In incorporated cities or towns having more than five thousand inhabitants, the justices of the peace shall receive such salary as may be provided by law, and shall receive no fees for their own use.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause notice of the foregoing constitutional amendment to be published at least four times during the four weeks next preceding the election in every legal newspaper in the state.



COMPLETE TEXT OF

## House Joint Resolution 55

BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, IN LEGISLATIVE SESSION ASSEMBLED:

THAT, At the next general election to be held in this state there shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the state for their approval and ratification, or rejection, an amendment to Article XII of the state Constitution by amending section 18 thereof to read as follows:

Article XII, section 18. The legislature ~~((shall))~~ may pass laws establishing reasonable ~~((maximum))~~ rates of charges for the transportation of passengers and freight, and to correct abuses and prevent discrimination and extortion in the rates of freight and passenger tariffs on the different railroads and other common carriers in the state, and shall enforce such laws by adequate penalties. A railroad and transportation commission may be established and its powers and duties fully defined by law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause notice of the foregoing constitutional amendment to be published at least four times during the four weeks next preceding the election in every legal newspaper in the state.



COMPLETE TEXT OF

## House Joint Resolution 56

BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, IN LEGISLATIVE SESSION ASSEMBLED:

THAT, At the next general election to be held in this state there shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the state for their approval and ratification, or rejection, an amendment to Article XII of the state Constitution by amending section 15 thereof to read as follows:

Article XII, section 15. No discrimination in charges or facilities for transportation shall be made by any railroad or other transportation company between places or persons, or in the facilities for the transportation of the same classes of freight or passengers within this state, or coming from or going to any other state. ~~((Persons and property transported over any railroad, or by any other transportation company, or individual, shall be delivered at any station, landing or port, at charges not exceeding the charges for the transportation of persons and property of the same class, in the same direction, to any more distant station, port or landing. Excursion and commutation tickets may be issued at special rates.))~~

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause notice of the foregoing constitutional amendment to be published at least four times during the four weeks next preceding the election in every legal newspaper in the state.



COMPLETE TEXT OF

## House Joint Resolution 57

BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, IN LEGISLATIVE SESSION ASSEMBLED:

THAT, At the next general election to be held in this state there shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the state for their approval and ratification, or rejection, an amendment to Article XII of the state Constitution by repealing section 14 thereof in its entirety.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause notice of the foregoing constitutional amendment to be published at least four times during the four weeks next preceding the election in every legal newspaper in the state.