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House Bill 5290
An Act Concerning the Leasing of Judicial Branch Facilities

Judiciary Committee
March 9, 2012

The Department of Administrative Services ("DAS") offers the following testimony in support of House Bill 5290, **An Act Concerning Leasing of Judicial Branch Facilities**.

Currently, DAS has the authority to represent the state in its dealings with third parties for the leasing of real estate for state offices, including most Judicial Branch facilities. The Judicial Branch leases comprise more than 25% of the DAS lease portfolio. During the 2011 legislative session, the Judicial Branch raised some concerns about the leasing process and, initially, sought a legislative change giving the Judicial Branch authority over its own leases. DAS and the Judicial Branch, in conjunction with the State Properties Review Board and the Office of Policy and Management, have been working cooperatively to address these concerns.

This group has implemented administrative changes to the process including, among other things, regular and ongoing meetings for the stakeholders. In addition to the administrative changes, the parties have agreed it would be more efficient to allow the Judicial Branch authority over some aspects of its leasing activity, within the discretion of the DAS Commissioner. Statutory changes, however, are necessary to provide the authority to implement this plan.

Specifically, HB 5290 gives the Chief Court Administrator the authority to represent the state in real estate matters affecting the Judicial Branch if delegated to do so by DAS Commissioner; and allows the DAS Commissioner to delegate authority to the Chief Court Administrator to negotiate and enter into leases for office, court or parking facilities for the Judicial Branch.

DAS notes that HB 5290 mirrors sSb 1219 (file 697), which was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and adopted on the Consent Calendar in the Senate last year.

DAS respectfully urges the Committee to approve HB 5290 and help DAS and the Judicial Branch continue their efforts to improve the state leasing process. We would be happy to meet with the Committee at any time to discuss it further.