

# **Update on Judicial Vacancies and Interaction With the NCSC Study Recommendations**

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# Judicial Vacancies

- There will be 26 judicial vacancies by the end of calendar year (CY) 2013
  - Vacancies include: 13 Circuit Court judgeships, 12 General District Court judgeships, and 1 Juvenile and Domestic Relations (J&DR) District Court judgeship
- 4 of the current vacancies are not frozen based on Appropriation Act language
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> circuit, one of 2 vacancies in 4<sup>th</sup> circuit , one of 2 vacancies in the 15<sup>th</sup> general district, and 25<sup>th</sup> J&DR district court judgeships
- Based on mandatory retirements and currently announced retirements, there will be at least an additional 12 vacancies in CY 2014 and 7 in CY 2015
  - At a minimum, 11.2% of the circuit and general district judgeships are, or will become, vacant by the end of CY 2015
    - 15.2% of circuit court judgeships
    - 8.6% of district court judgeships

# 24 Circuit Court Vacancies

- The 13 circuit court vacancies in CY 2013 include:
  - 2 vacancies in both the 4<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> districts
  - 1 each in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup>
- Announced or mandatory circuit court retirements for the following two years include:
  - 6 retirements in CY 2014 - one each in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup>
  - 5 retirements in CY 2015 - one each in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup>
- There will be 2 circuit court vacancies in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup>, and the 19<sup>th</sup> will have 3 vacancies over the next 3 years

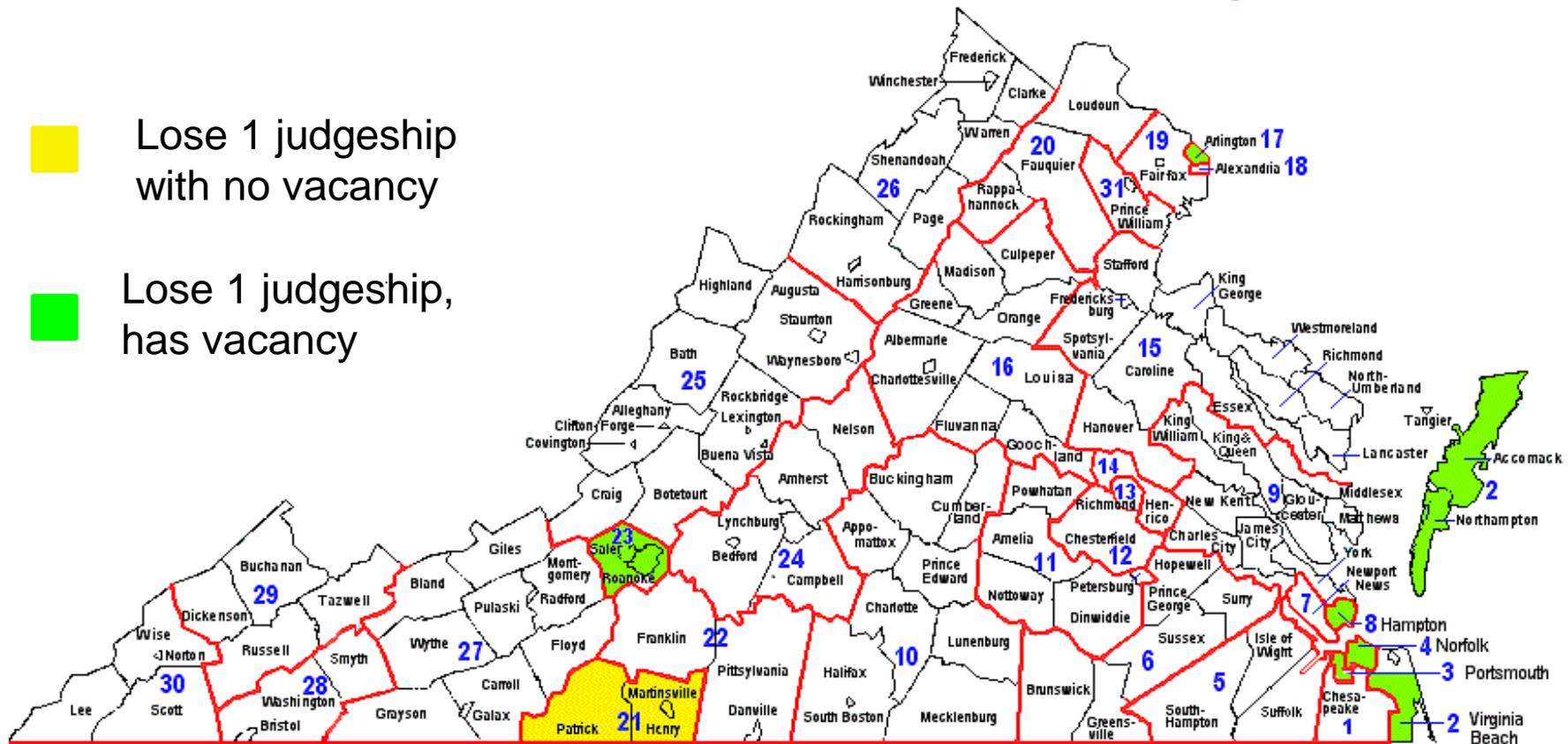
# 21 District Court Vacancies

- The 13 district court vacancies in CY 2013 include 12 general district court vacancies and 1 vacancy for the 25<sup>th</sup> J&DR district
- The 12 general district court judgeships include:
  - 2 vacancies in the 15<sup>th</sup> district
  - 1 each in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, and 27<sup>th</sup>
- Announced or mandatory district court retirements for the next two years include:
  - 6 retirements in CY 2014 – 2 general district judgeships (2<sup>nd</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>) and 4 J&DR judgeships (2<sup>nd</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 31<sup>st</sup>)
  - 2 retirements in CY 2015 – 1 general district court judgeship in the 30<sup>th</sup> and 1 J&DR judgeships in the 15<sup>th</sup>
- The 15<sup>th</sup> general district court is the only district where there are 2 known vacancies of the same category of judge

# **Interaction Between Vacancies & the NCSC Study Recommendations**

# Based on the NCSC Recommendations 7 Circuits Would Lose One Judgeship

- Lose 1 judgeship with no vacancy
- Lose 1 judgeship, has vacancy



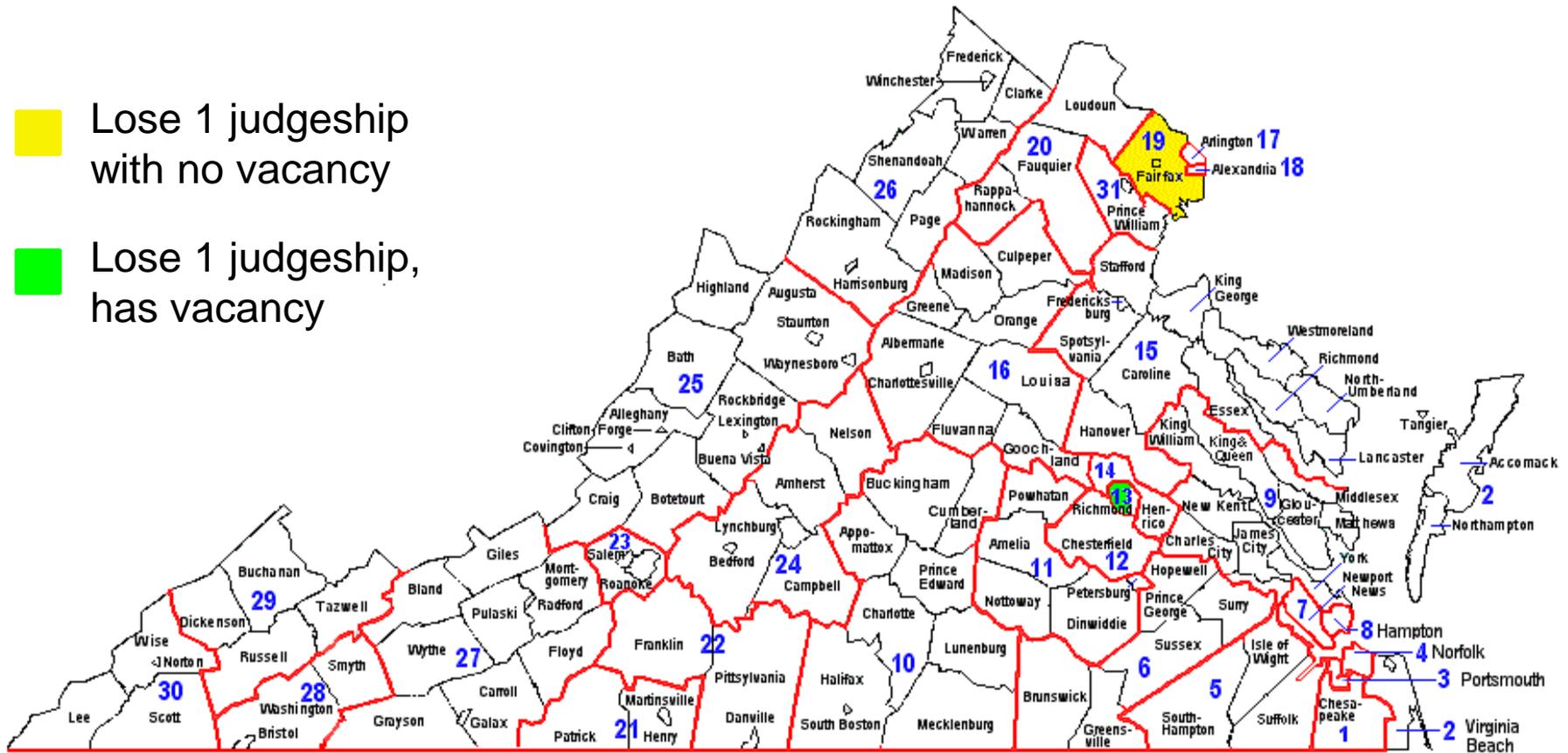
The 21<sup>st</sup> Circuit is the only one of the 7 circuits which does not have a current or announced vacancy at this time



# Based on the NCSC Recommendations 2 Districts Would Lose One J&DR Court Judgeship

■ Lose 1 judgeship with no vacancy

■ Lose 1 judgeship, has vacancy



The 19th district does not have a current or announced vacancy at this time

# Fiscal Impact Issues & Study Recommendations

- Chapter 806 assumed \$3.9 million in savings, as a general fund reversion, in FY 2014 from judicial vacancy savings
  - Eliminating judicial freeze and funding total number of judgeships currently in Code would eliminate savings
- The cost of creating additional judgeships per year is around \$377,000 per year for circuit court judgeships and \$295,000 per year for district court judgeships
  - Includes salary and fringe benefit cost of any additional judgeships is \$273,000 per circuit court judge and \$247,000 per district court judge
  - The Compensation Board estimates 2 deputy sheriffs and 1 circuit court clerk staff per new circuit court clerk judge
  - The Compensation Board estimates 1 deputy sheriff for each new general district court judgeship.
    - In addition, depending on current staffing levels there may be a need for additional district court clerks (not included in totals above)
  - Estimates assume \$15,000 in equipment cost per judgeship

## Implementation Issues If Recommendations Are Adopted

- Would any loss/transfers of Judgeships occur only after vacancies occur within the circuit/district losing the judgeship?
- Would staffing for Compensation Board positions, circuit court clerk staff and deputy sheriff positions, and Judicial Department district court clerks positions also be transferred?