

Republican Senate President David Williams will end a contentious legislative career to take a judicial position offered to him by Democratic Gov. Steve Beshear.

Beshear appointed Williams circuit judge in southern Kentucky on Friday morning. The move allows Beshear to rid himself of his chief political foe in the Legislature.

Williams, a Burkesville attorney, ran against Beshear last year in a vitriolic gubernatorial election that showed the two men clearly disliked one another. However, Beshear has a record of appointing Republicans to higher-paying government positions to get them out of the Senate.

The salary for Williams' new job is about \$124,000 a year, more than double what he makes as a lawmaker. Taking the position could also double state pension benefits for the 59-year-old after he retires.