



Judicial Council of California

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November 17, 2023

Subject Text

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Title

Judicial Council | 2021 Legislative Priorities (Action Required)

Summary

Each year, the Judicial Council sponsors legislation and adopts legislative priorities to further key council objectives and establishes priorities for the upcoming legislative year. In past years, the council's legislative priorities have focused on implementing efficiencies in the courts, investing in the judicial branch, and securing critically needed judgeships. Staff recommends that the Legislation Committee recommend to the Judicial Council a similar approach for the 2021 legislative year.

Recommendation

The Legislation Committee recommends that the Judicial Council approve the following legislative priorities for 2021:

1. Advocate for the following:
 - a. Continued investment in the judicial branch to include stable and reliable funding for courts to address annual cost increases in baseline operations and plan for the future; and
 - b. Sufficient resources to improve physical access to the courts by keeping courts open, to expand access by increasing the ability of court users to conduct branch business online, to restore programs and services that were reduced over the past few years, and to continue to implement innovations in programs and services;
2. Increase the number of judgeships and judicial officers in superior courts by:
 - a. Seeking funding for the remaining authorized but unfunded judgeships (see table, page 4), to be allocated to the courts with the greatest need based on the most recently approved Judicial Needs Assessment; and
 - b. Advocating for legislative ratification of the Judicial Council's authority to convert vacant subordinate judicial officer (SJO) positions to judgeships in eligible courts;
3. Seek legislative authorization, if needed and authorized by the Judicial Council in 2021, for the disposition of unused courthouses in a fair market value transaction, with the proceeds to be directed to the Immediate and Critical Needs Account of the State Court Facilities Construction Fund established by Senate Bill 1407 (Perata; Stats. 2008, ch. 311) or any other Judicial Council facilities fund authorized by the Legislature;
4. Continue to sponsor or support legislation to improve judicial branch operational efficiencies, including cost-savings and cost-recovery measures as well as the ability to conduct proceedings remotely in order to expand safe and reliable access to justice;
5. Sponsor legislation to amend the Code of Civil Procedure to recognize Native American Day and/or additional or other ethnic or racial group as a judicial holiday;
6. Advocate for legislation to implement pretrial detention reform; and
7. Delegate to the Legislation Committee the authority to take positions or provide comments on behalf of the Judicial Council on proposed legislation (state and federal), administrative rules or regulations, and proposals by other bodies or agencies after evaluating input from council advisory bodies, council staff, and the courts, provided that the input is consistent with the council's established policies and precedents.

Speakers

Hon. Marla O. Anderson, Chair, Legislation Committee

Mr. Cory T. Jaspersen, Governmental Affairs