



Superior Court of California

March 13, 2012

The Honorable Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye
Chief Justice of California and
Chair of the Judicial Council
350 McAllister Street
San Francisco, CA 94102-4797

Dear Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye:

As Presiding Judges, Assistant Presiding Judges and Court Executive Officers, we write to you to express our grave concern about the state of the Judicial Branch budget now and in the foreseeable future. Since 2008 trial courts have been cut by \$605 million. In all of our communities across California these cuts have had crippling effects on the courts' ability to protect public safety, address immediate needs of families and children in crisis and timely resolve business disputes that allow our economy to recover and thrive.

As trial court leaders, we bear daily witness of the impact of recent budget decisions. Most acutely, those decisions have caused trial courts to close courtrooms, dramatically reduce our workforce, significantly restrict justice for individuals, families and businesses, and eliminate many services designed to assist members of our communities least able to access the judicial system on their own.

Simply put, these cuts are not sustainable. Nor is it reasonable to conclude as does the Judicial Council's recent six-point budget plan, that the trial courts can absorb \$352 million in cuts and adequately fulfill our legal mandate and ethical obligation to the people of the State of California. Justice cannot survive at such a level.

We believe that there is an urgent need to re-prioritize all Judicial Branch expenditures. First among those issues involves the Judicial Council's consideration of the future funding for CCMS V4 that will be addressed at your March 27, 2012 meeting. It is our firm position that we can no longer support further development or deployment of CCMS V4. According to a recent report to the Judicial Council by the AOC on February 28, 2012 the branch has spent \$521.5 million dollars on CCMS through FY 10-11. This amount does not include necessary future costs associated with deployment of CCMS V4.

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If state-wide deployment of CCMS V4 was ever an attainable goal, that time has passed as the State's budget crisis has grown and endured. We urge you to vote to immediately cease funding CCMS V4. We recommend that AOC staff be directed to immediately work with trial courts to identify other case management systems that would meet local courts' needs at a far more reasonable cost. Lastly, we request that you further determine that the significant monetary savings attained as a result of no longer funding CCMS V4, be directed to the trial courts so that essential court services can be protected.

CCMS V4 represents only one of several significant areas where a re-prioritization of expenditures and programs is critical to the Judicial Branch's ability to fulfill our primary mission. Now is the time to honestly identify those programs that are truly essential to our justice system, to abandon outmoded priorities, and to move forward with a realistic vision of the Judicial Branch in these difficult economic times. Now is the time to stop CCMS V4 and to redirect all funding to the trial courts.

Thank you for your careful attention to this important decision.

Very truly yours,

Hon. Katherine A. Feinstein
Presiding Judge of the
Superior Court of California
County of San Francisco

Mr. T. Michael Yuen
Executive Officer
Superior Court of California
County of San Francisco

Hon. Lee Smalley Edmon
Presiding Judge of the
Superior Court of California
County of Los Angeles

Mr. John A. Clarke
Executive Officer
Superior Court of California
County of Los Angeles

Hon. Laurie M. Earl
Presiding Judge of the
Superior Court of California
County of Sacramento

Mr. Edward G. Pollard
Interim Executive Officer
Superior Court of California
County of Sacramento

Hon. Mark Cope
Assistant Presiding Judge of the
Superior Court of California
County of Riverside

Ms. Sherri R. Carter
Executive Officer
Superior Court of California
County of Riverside

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Presiding Judge of the
Superior Court of California
County of Orange

Hon. Michael G. Bush
Presiding Judge of the
Superior Court of California
County of Kern

Hon. F. Dana Walton
Presiding Judge of the
Superior Court of California
County of Mariposa

Hon. Beth Labson Freeman
Presiding Judge of the
Superior Court of California
County of San Mateo

Mr. Alan Carlson
Executive Officer
Superior Court of California
County of Orange

Mr. Terry A. McNally
Executive Officer
Superior Court of California
County of Kern

Hon. Anthony C. Edwards
Presiding Judge of the
Superior Court of California
County of Trinity

Mr. John C. Fitton
Executive Officer
Superior Court of California
County of San Mateo