

**From:** John S. Adams  
**To:** Invitations  
**Subject:** CORRECTED Comments on the SEC Report  
**Date:** Friday, July 20, 2012 3:31:53 PM

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**From:** John S. Adams  
**Sent:** Friday, July 20, 2012 3:25 PM  
**To:** 'invitations@jud.ca.gov'  
**Subject:** Comments on the SEC Report

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## Comments on the SEC Report – Judge John Adams

I am Judge John Adams, having served nine years on the Orange County Superior Court. Let me take this opportunity to thank our Chief Justice for creating the SEC Committee, whose hard work and diligent efforts on behalf of the judicial branch are beyond reproach. Please allow me to buttress my support for the **immediate** implementation of the SEC recommendations with the following observations:

I think it is important for the Judicial Council to recognize its role in aiding and abetting the AOC's efforts over the preceding 15 years to aggrandize its role far beyond the intention of the framers of the **Lockyer-Isenberg Trial Court Funding Act of 1997**. Notwithstanding the act's intent to preserve local court governance and maintain the decentralized model of court management that had served most counties quite well for more than a century, evidence suggests the Judicial Council abdicated its role of oversight and control over an administrative agency willing to do almost anything to increase its dominion over trial courts. With seeming *carte blanche*, the AOC embarked upon a campaign to seize additional powers, obfuscate the truth, and marginalize judges with the courage to stand up and speak out in opposition.

That the AOC is a bloated, opaque institution, operated by imperious leaders who brook no dissent, while being overseen by a council willing to rubber stamp wildly expensive adventures, would be an understatement. We are indebted to the members of the SEC Committee for their thorough analysis and thoughtful recommendations, presented in forthright fashion.

While we have now been forced to reap the bitter harvest of what the AOC has sown, the recommendations contained in the SEC Report give the Judicial Council the opportunity to make important changes that are long overdue. Beyond mere implementation, the Judicial Council should fully embrace the restoration of trial court governance to local court leadership.

Indeed, the seeds of a new beginning for the judicial branch have been planted with the passage of the state budget, which precludes the AOC from squandering money desperately needed by trial courts. I believe it is time for a democratically elected council, for the restoration of local trial court governance, for prompt and full implementation of the SEC recommendations, and for a reduction of the role of the AOC to that of administrative support

to the judiciary as intended by the framers of trial court unification legislation.

The SEC Committee has provided, in sad and sobering detail, the underpinnings of how and why the AOC went off the rails. We owe a debt of gratitude to each and every committee member for their courage, their vision, and their recommendations.

In closing, let me offer this final observation: Forced unity is a doomed notion. Unity within the judiciary must occur naturally, based upon the democratic adoption of goals and policies by those charged with accountability for their success or failure, always mindful that we are ultimately responsible to the public we serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard on this matter.

Judge John Adams,  
Orange County Superior Court