



January 23, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Assembly

FROM: Consumer Attorneys of California
California Defense Counsel

SUBJECT: **AB 1208 (Calderon): OPPOSE**

AB 1208 (Calderon) is presently awaiting action on the Assembly floor. The combined memberships of the Consumer Attorneys of California and the California Defense Counsel are **opposed** to the measure and are respectfully requesting your **"NO"** vote.

AB 1208 limits budgetary flexibility for the judicial branch and moves California away from a coordinated, statewide system of justice. The bill threatens to undermine a determined effort over the past 15 years to allocate judicial resources in an objective, needs-based process, and encourages the Balkanization of courts to the detriment of litigants and lawyers.

Our organizations represent lawyers litigating cases throughout California. Our members frequently practice in multiple counties. Through a great deal of hard work, the judicial branch has evolved into a unified system, where lawyers have a reasonable belief that rules, processes and fees will be consistent from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Reasonable uniformity is essential to the modern practice of law.

Creating inflexible rules for the allocation of scarce judicial branch resources is inconsistent with the statewide system that we rely upon. We are greatly concerned that the ultimate result would be a return to a piecemeal 58-county system of justice to which no lawyer who has practiced under both systems would like to return.

The present integrated system allows for a vigorous debate on the key technology and infrastructure projects facing the courts. Fundamentally, we do not believe that it is necessary for the Legislature to limit internal judicial branch flexibility in these areas. Permitting a small number of courts to exercise veto power over statewide projects would be very dysfunctional. Working with the Legislature and others, the judicial branch is evaluating "CCMS" and court construction projects within the context of reduced state court funding. AB 1208 will not assist in those efforts, but will instead encourage a return to a decentralized system of justice in California.

Please vote **"NO"** on AB 1208.