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## Commission for Impartial Courts Seeks Comment on Judicial Election Proposals

San Francisco—The Commission for Impartial Courts today announced that it is seeking public comment on a comprehensive set of recommendations designed to ensure the impartiality and accountability of California courts.

The report is now available for comment on the California Courts Web site: <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/tflists/commimpart.htm>.

“The manner in which judges are selected, retained, and removed from office can have a serious impact on the independence of the judiciary,” stated Chief Justice Ronald M. George at the time he appointed the commission in 2007. “It is essential that we make every effort to avoid politicizing the judiciary so that public confidence in the quality, impartiality, and accountability of judges is protected and maintained.”

The report contains 109 recommendations that cover the selection and retention of judges, conduct by judicial candidates, campaign finance and advertising, and public education and information about the judiciary, judicial elections, and judicial candidates.

The commission is led by a 19-member steering committee chaired by Associate Justice Ming W. Chin of the California Supreme Court. During the past two years, the steering committee and four task forces have conducted research on judicial elections, held public hearings, and developed final recommendations that will go to the Judicial Council for its review in August 2009.

**All comments must be received by noon on May 26, 2009.** For additional information, please contact Ms. Christine Patton, Project Director and Regional Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, Northern Bay Area Region, at this e-mail address:

[christine.patton@jud.ca.gov](mailto:christine.patton@jud.ca.gov).

*The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.*

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