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New Courthouse Dedication for the Fifth Appellate District Court of Appeal

Fresno—After more than eight years of planning, design and construction, the Court of Appeal, Fifth Appellate District (Fresno) will dedicate its new courthouse on September 13, 2007, in Fresno. Speaking at the event will be Chief Justice Ronald M. George, Administrative Presiding Justice James A. Ardaiz, and retired Court of Appeal Justice George N. Zenovich—for whom the building is named.

The new courthouse was made possible by the Trial Court Facilities Act of 2002, which is designed to ensure that all Californians have equal access to safe, secure, and adequate court facilities. As a symbol of the judicial branch's commitment to justice, the courthouse serves also as a national benchmark for open and accessible design.

“The design of the court and the words over its entry, ‘*Equal Justice Under Law*,’ symbolize the judiciary’s commitment to the people of California,” stated Administrative Presiding Justice Ardaiz, of the Fifth Appellate District.

The courthouse was constructed under the direction of the Administrative Office of the Courts. With 61,000 square feet and room for an expansion of up to 25,000 additional square feet, the building reflects a mix of traditional Greek and modern architectural elements. Among the building's unique features are two interior atriums allowing glass walls for the courtroom which provide significant natural illumination, while maintaining building security and privacy.

The building houses chambers for 11 justices, offices for attorneys, clerks and administrative staff, conference rooms, a library, and a settlement conference suite. To view images of the court facility, see www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/5dca-add.htm.

The Fifth District represents nine counties: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera,

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Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, Tulare and Tuolumne.

Members of the press wishing to attend the dedication must contact Leisa V. Biggers, Clerk/Administrator at 559-445-5491. Tours for the general public will begin October 16, 2007. Contact Ms. Biggers for scheduling after September 17, 2007.

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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