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NEWS RELEASE

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2007 California Bench Bar Conference Opens Today in Anaheim

Importance of Procedural Fairness in Courts Will Be Explored in Fred Friendly Dialogue This Afternoon

Anaheim—Hundreds of court leaders and justice system partners from across the state will attend 2007 California Bench Bar Biannual Conference, which opens here today. For the second time, the Judicial Council of California is sponsoring the educational program in collaboration with the State Bar of California and the California Judges Association.

The conference features these key events:

Wednesday, September 26, 1:30—4:30 p.m.

Conference Opening and Plenary Session: *Enhancing Public Trust and Confidence Through Procedural Fairness*

This session will feature a stimulating Fred Friendly dialogue on procedural fairness and its impact on public trust and confidence in the California courts. Harvard Professor Arthur Miller will lead a group of distinguished panelists as they confront hypotheticals inspired by policies from *Justice in Focus*, the recently adopted six-year strategic plan for the judicial branch.

Thursday, September 27, 12:15—1:30 p.m.

Judicial Council Leadership Recognition Luncheon

Chief Justice Ronald M. George and California Administrative Director of the Courts William C. Vickrey will present the prestigious Ralph N. Kleps Awards, the Distinguished Services Awards, and the Benjamin Aranda III Access to Justice Award. In addition, the Stanley Mosk Defender of Justice Award will be presented in memory of Court of Appeal Justice Paul Boland, who died recently after a sudden illness.

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**2:15 –4:15 pm. Collaborative Bench-Bar Course:
*Protecting the Independence of the Judicial Branch and the Impartiality of Judicial Decisionmaking***

This session will address the principle of judicial independence and the influence of special interest and partisan politics in judicial elections. Panelists will outline ways in which judicial officers and attorneys can foster public understanding and trust in the courts and the values associated with its independence and impartiality.

Saturday, September 29, 11 a.m.

State of the Judiciary Address

Chief Justice Ronald M. George will deliver his annual State of the Judiciary address on the challenges and accomplishments in state court administration over the past year.

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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.