



**NEWS RELEASE** NR 70-09

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Six New Courthouse Projects Receive Funding Authorization**

San Francisco—Six new courthouse projects to be financed by Senate Bill 1407 received initial funding authorization today by the State Public Works Board (SPWB). This approval marks the official start of these projects. The new courthouse projects include:

- San Diego – New Central San Diego Courthouse – the largest project to be funded under SB 1407
- Inyo – New Independence Courthouse – 2 courtrooms
- Kern – New Delano Courthouse – 3 courtrooms
- Los Angeles – New Santa Clarita Courthouse – 4 courtrooms
- Merced – New Los Banos – 2 courtrooms
- Tuolumne – New Sonora Courthouse – 5 courtrooms

SB 1407 was enacted by the state Legislature last year to provide up to \$5 billion in funding for 41 new and renovated court facilities using court user fees rather than the state's general fund. These six projects were all ranked as "immediate need" or "critical need," making them among the highest priority capital-outlay projects for California's judicial branch. According to Chief Justice Ronald M. George, "Strengthening the physical foundation of our judicial system is more than a metaphor. Courthouses are as vital a part of California's infrastructure as bridges, highways, and water systems. It is time to adequately fund this fundamental component of the infrastructure of our democracy. Public safety and the interests of 38 million Californians require it."

To initiate each project, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), must seek funding authorization from the Joint Legislative Budget Committee of the State Legislature as well as the SPWB. This first authorization enables the AOC to proceed with site selection, environmental review, and preliminary plans, which is the initial portion of architectural design. Courthouse construction projects typically take approximately five years from start to finish.

The AOC officially began the first 15 projects funded by SB 1407 in late July of this year. The AOC plans to request funding authorizations for all remaining SB 1407 projects between now and May 2010. More information about SB 1407, including the list of 41 projects approved by the Judicial Council:

[www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/sb1407.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/sb1407.htm)

More information about these projects:

[www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/projects.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/projects.htm)

(more)

More information about the AOC's process to build courthouses in California:

[www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/building.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/occm/building.htm)

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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.*