

**From:** Lewis Davis  
**To:** Invitations  
**Subject:** Support for Immediate Implementation of SEC Recommendations  
**Date:** Thursday, July 19, 2012 3:10:14 PM  
**Attachments:** Lewis Davis2.vcf

---

Public Comment of Judge Lewis A. Davis re: SEC Implementation

July 19, 2012

Dear Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye, Justice Miller, members of the Judicial Council, and the Strategic Evaluation Committee (SEC).

I write in my capacity as a Superior Court Judge for Contra Costa County, although my comments do not necessarily represent those of my colleagues.

I respectfully urge the Judicial Council to implement every recommendation of the SEC immediately and without hesitation.

In addition to the SEC, both the California Judges Association (CJA) and the Alliance of California Judges (ACJ) have expressed their support of the SEC recommendations and have well articulated their reasons for their position. I include below some additional observations supporting the immediate implementation of the SEC recommendations.

The 2005 study entitled, "Trust and Confidence in the California Courts," commissioned by the AOC on behalf of the Judicial Council, concluded that a principal factor influencing the people's opinions of the courts is their perception of fairness in court procedures (at p. 24). Among the factors affecting that perception is accessibility of the courts. The same study indicated that 67% of the people surveyed stated that it was "very important" for courts to stay open at times convenient for working people (at p. 31).

In that regard, I reflect on the fact that in 2009 I and many members of our bench as well as judicial officers throughout the state agreed to make voluntary contributions to the state or the county to help offset the budget crisis at the time that resulted in court closures of one day per month. We were advised and urged to do so as a way of "sharing the pain" with other government employees who were thought to be making similar sacrifices.

It is against this backdrop that I learned of the AOC policy of compensating their employees with a leave day in exchange for a furlough day. In these dire times such bookkeeping shenanigans are simply unacceptable. Severe budget cuts have already been imposed on the courts resulting in court closures and dramatic and alarming staff reductions, and even more severe cuts are to be imposed in the near term. Court closures and severe staff reductions result in substantial impediments to the delivery of justice to the citizens of our State. Overblown bureaucracies that serve as a drain on limited resources must be reformed and "right-sized" to accomplish their core functions. The AOC is no exception.

Many of us have participated enthusiastically in providing judicial training through CJER or other programs provided by the AOC. The employees working in those areas are dedicated and very competent. My

comments are not meant in any way to disparage those individuals. However, I share the views expressed by both the CJA and the ACJ in finding that the management overseeing those and other functions has, in the words of another responder to the SEC report, "lost its way." The Judicial Council must implement the SEC recommendations immediately and without hesitation.

Lewis A. Davis  
Contra Costa County Superior Court  
Department #13  
1020 Ward Street  
Martinez, CA 94553

Tel. -- 925-957-5713

[ldavi@contracosta.courts.ca.gov](mailto:ldavi@contracosta.courts.ca.gov)