

From: Judge Deborah L. Sanchez
To: Invitations
Subject: Public Comment - SEC Report
Date: Thursday, July 12, 2012 6:38:13 PM

Dear Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye, Justice Miller and Members of the Judicial Council of California:

General:

Thank you for this opportunity to express my thoughts on the SEC Report and the proposed recommendations.

I am writing to urge the Judicial Council to endorse the findings and implement each of the recommendations within the report.

These actions should bring a new era of respect for the many judicial officers of this state. Previously, the lack of respect and the Judicial Council's overt attempts to monitor the voices of judges was evident to me, personally.

As a newer judge, a few years ago, I wanted to appear before the Judicial Council on a matter involving an action of the former Chief Justice. I prepared to take a day off, use my own funds for travel and address the Judicial Council. As I was preparing my remarks I learned that they had to be "reviewed" three days before the meeting and approved.

I was shocked. A time limit is reasonable, but having to submit my comments ahead of time was intimidating. Having to have my comments approved was insulting. I have been before other governmental, non-judicial bodies, before I was a judge, and have voiced my opinions on matters that I felt strongly about - matters that were important to me. Imagine my surprise when my own peers would not allow me to speak without first having my comments reviewed and, in essence, censored.

It was disheartening. When I became a judge, I believed I was joining my worthy brethren in a noble profession that brought good to the community, as individuals and as a whole. Being shut out left me feeling I was not welcome to contribute to the good of the whole and that I really didn't matter. This experience is an example of the AOC/Judicial Council operating out of balance. It is my hope that the state's judicial talent will continue to blossom with the respect that my colleagues, not only deserve, but have earned.

Specific Comment:

An immediate adoption of Recommendations 4-1, 4-2 and 4-3 is in order with all other recommendations being implemented as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Deborah L. Sanchez
Judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court