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Judicial Council to Hold Public Meetings In San Francisco Next Week

San Francisco—A trial court emergency funding request, judicial branch legislative priorities, and courthouse construction are among the issues to be considered by the Judicial Council of California at two public business meetings next week.

The meetings are scheduled from 12:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. on Monday, December 12, and from 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. on Tuesday, December 13, in the Hiram Johnson State Office Building, Judicial Council Conference Center, Third Floor, 455 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco.

Chaired by Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye, the council will audiocast both meetings live on the California Courts website at www.courts.ca.gov/policyadmin-jc.htm. The meeting agenda and reports are now available at <http://www.courts.ca.gov/16092.htm>. A summary of the meeting agenda follows.

Monday, December 12, 2011: 12:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

California Court Case Management System: A status report will be delivered on potential collaborations with the State Bar and the Chan Soon-Siong Family Foundation on deploying CCMS and other technology activities. The discussion will also include the council's annual written report to the Legislature on the status of CCMS and the Phoenix Program, a statewide technology initiative to assist the courts in managing financial and human resources. *(No action required.)*

Judicial Workload Assessment: The SB 56 Working Group recommends that the Judicial Council approve new caseweights for evaluating the statewide need for judicial officers. If approved, the new caseweights would replace those approved in 2001 and would update estimates of judicial need to reflect current law and practice.

Courthouse Construction Projects: The Court Facilities Working Group recommends canceling projects for the Superior Courts of Alpine and Sierra Counties and committing additional funds to move other courthouse

construction projects forward in fiscal year 2011–2012. The working group will also recommend approval of an annual update to the Judicial Branch AB 1473 Five-Year Infrastructure Plan and seek additional funding for operations and maintenance and for facility modifications.

Legislative Priorities for 2012: Advocating to restore a portion of the judicial branch budget should be one of the Judicial Council’s top legislative priorities during the coming year, according to recommendations to be made by the council’s Policy Coordination and Liaison Committee. The committee also proposes that the council oppose Assembly Bill 1208, which would reduce the council’s authority and role in judicial branch governance, and continue to secure new judgeships for state courts.

Tuesday, December 13, 2011: 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Emergency Funding Request: The Superior Court of San Joaquin County requests \$2 million in fiscal year 2011-2012 supplemental funding for urgent needs to avoid more layoffs, furloughs, reduced hours and possibly additional court closures.

Trial Court Security Funding: The Trial Court Budget Working Group recommends that the Judicial Council allocate \$1.249 million from the Trial Court Improvement Fund for 1) replacement of wireless duress systems at trial courts, and 2) development by a certified actuary of other post-employment benefits valuation reports on individual trial courts for fiscal years 2011–2012 and 2012–2013.

Foster Care Progress Report: Council members will hear an informational report on two and a half years of implementation efforts by the Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care, which issued sweeping recommendations for reform of the juvenile court and child welfare systems in 2008. *(No action required.)*

Bench-Bar-Media Committee: This committee recommends that the council accept its final report and direct the Interim Administrative Director of the Courts to refer the report recommendations to the appropriate council advisory committees, Administrative Office of the Courts divisions, and other entities for further study and consideration. In its report, the committee proposes recommendations to improve media access to court proceedings and records, enhance education about the roles and responsibilities of the courts and media, and help resolve media access conflicts in a manner that protects and promotes the administration of justice.

Financial Accountability and Efficiency: The council will hear an informational report by the Advisory Committee on Financial Accountability and Efficiency for the Judicial Branch on its preliminary review of the core functions, funding levels and sources, and staffing of Administrative Office of the Courts divisions, and identification of collaborative efforts among divisions. This report is set for discussion from 12:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. *(No action required.)*

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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 ensures leadership and excellence in court administration.