

— OFFICERS —  
Penny Alexander Kelley  
— President —  
J. Byron Streifling  
— President-Elect —  
Walter T. Moore  
— Vice President —  
M. Wayne Tucker  
— Secretary-Treasurer —  
Wilfred J. Schneider, Jr.  
— Immediate Past President —  
CLAIRE E. FURNESS  
Executive Director

# SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

— DIRECTORS —  
Klymberli S. Apaloo  
Thomas W. Dominick  
Cl. Farrell  
James B. Hackleman  
Richard D. Marca  
William D. Shapiro  
Michael A. Scaffidi  
Roberta L. Taylor

555 NORTH ARROWHEAD AVENUE • SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92401-1201  
TEL: (909) 885-1986 • FAX: (909) 889-0400

December 2, 2005  
By Facsimile

Assemblymember Joe Baca, Jr.  
201 North E Street  
Suite 205  
San Bernardino, CA 92401  
(909) 388-1413  
(909) 388-1176 fax

Re: Riverside Civil Court Closures

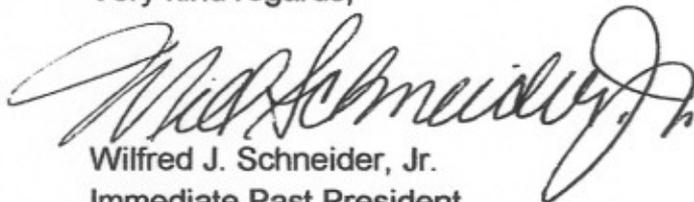
Dear Assemblymember Baca:

Attached is the reason why passage of SB 56 (New Judgeships) and SB 395 (Secure Court Facilities Bond) is so vitally important to the Inland Empire.

While the Civil Courts are closed, access and justice are denied to everyone.

We need your constant support until SB 56 and SB 395 pass the Assembly.

Very kind regards,



Wilfred J. Schneider, Jr.  
Immediate Past President  
San Bernardino County Bar Association  
Cell - 909-241-9169



**Superior Court of California  
County of Riverside**

4075 Main Street, Suite 310, Riverside, CA 92501

**NEWS For Immediate Release**

November 30, 2005

Contact: Sharon Waters, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
(951) 955-5536

(electronic version available at [www.courts.co.riverside.ca.us/newsmedia](http://www.courts.co.riverside.ca.us/newsmedia))

**Court Suspends Civil Trials to Relieve Criminal Case Backlog**

**Riverside County:** Beginning December 12, 2005, trials in most civil cases in Riverside County courts will be suspended, Presiding Judge Sharon Waters announced today. The suspension will remain in effect through January 20, 2006, when trials in a limited number of civil cases may resume if the backlog of criminal cases is eliminated. If the backlog still exists, then trials of affected cases could be postponed for several months.

"We are no longer able to try all pending criminal cases in the departments normally assigned to try them," said Judge Waters. "Criminal cases have strict time limits. If we cannot begin a criminal trial within the time limits, the case must be dismissed. We regret the delay in trying civil cases, but we have no choice. We cannot allow criminal cases to be dismissed unless we have used every resource available to us."

While caseloads have expanded with the increasing population of the county, the number of judges has not kept pace. Since the year 2000, Riverside County's

population has increased by 20 percent. During that same time period, the bench of the Riverside County Superior Court has grown by only one judge. There are now 3.7 judicial officers per 100,000 county residents – the lowest ratio ever. Among the 14 largest (most populated) counties in the state, Riverside' ratio of judicial officers to population is the lowest.

“The Board of Supervisors has recently authorized substantial increases in staff to our justice partners, the Sheriff, the District Attorney and the Public Defender, to deal with their expanding caseloads,” Judge Waters observed. “A bill to give us additional judges so that we could keep pace has stalled in the state legislature. Even that bill gives us far fewer new judges than we need, as shown by independent studies. It is simply no longer possible to try all the cases with a judicial staff only one greater than we had in the year 2000.”

Trials of small claims, landlord-tenant, family law, and probate cases will not be delayed by the suspension. However, Judge Waters cautioned that even those cases may be delayed in the future if temporary suspension is not effective in relieving the press of criminal cases.

#####