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To: Invitations
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Being a relatively new judge I've been able to observe, but have chosen not to participate in, a dialogue evolving between factions which include individuals I know and who I greatly respect. That these individuals could have such disparate views surprised and at some level disturbed me when the negative accusations began being exchanged. This being said I was relieved when our Chief Justice formed the SEC and assigned highly qualified and distinguished members of the judiciary along with others to conduct a thorough review of the AOC. I reviewed the report and recommendations and believe that it reflects the effort and thoroughness with which they approached this monumental task. I noted that the report and recommendations reflect the unanimous judgment of each of the committee's members and I believe they, as well as our Chief Justice are owed a great debt of gratitude for this undertaking.

When I was told that at one time there just shy of three fourths of an employee at the AOC for almost each judge in the State it became clear that there was a bloated organization which grossly exceeded that which was contemplated when formed. Clearly that ratio has changed, there is a currently a more civil dialogue that's being engaged in and it is clear to me that I needed to join each of my colleagues in the State who are urging the Judicial Council to accept and implement each of the recommendations that are expressed in the SEC report.

My thanks to the Chief as well as to each and every one of the individuals who contributed to the report.

Judge Michael B. Donner
Riverside Superior Court