

**From:** Commr H. Jay Ford  
**To:** Invitations  
**Subject:** SEC comment  
**Date:** Friday, July 20, 2012 2:41:08 PM

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**I strongly urge the Judicial Council to promptly adopt and implement all of the recommendations in the Strategic Evaluation Committee report.**

**As a consequence of the budget cuts to the Los Angeles Superior Court, four cities (Malibu, Westlake Village, Agoura Hills, and Calabasas), and a large geographic portion of unincorporated Los Angeles County in the West District will no longer have their civil cases heard in their community courthouse. Folks now have to travel as much as three hours away to have a simple small claims, unlawful detainer or limited civil case heard. Even worse, the Malibu Courthouse is now no longer available for jurors to serve jury duty. Instead, those jurors summoned for duty will now have to travel further away at greater expense of money and time. And, the end is not yet in sight. Since 1933 these communities have enjoyed the access of a community courthouse, beginning with a Justice Court. That is about to come to an end as closure of the entire Malibu Courthouse is looming as an inevitable consequence of the budget cuts. The true travesty is that this budget crises, at least for the Court, could have been avoided if the recommendations made in the SEC report had been implemented long ago as a matter of course, rather than an afterthought. By failing to properly manage the judicial branch and its budget, the courts are losing, by leaps and bounds, the commitment the Court made 20 years ago to expand access to justice through community based courts.**

**Please do not delay the implementation of the SEC recommendations any longer.**

**With deep regret,  
Commr. H. Jay Ford III**