

From: Laura Hammes
To: Invitations
Subject: SEC Report
Date: Wednesday, July 11, 2012 11:05:43 PM

Dear Sirs/Madams:

I felt for many years, prior to retirement, that the AOC was out of control. By the late 1990's, the AOC had become an arrogant and cash-loaded bureaucracy, treating the states' judges as if they were ignorant children needing a firm hand so that "justice" would not be subverted. The AOC took its power and attitude from the Chief Justice and his appointees on the Judicial Council.

Until the Alliance of California Judges was created, the state's trial court judges passively allowed the Chief Justice, the Judicial Council and the AOC to build a powerful central system of one-man government over the entire judicial branch.

Under the guise of "protecting the independence" of the third branch of government, and "improving" the third branch of government, this powerful triumvirate (CJ, JC, AOC) usurped local authority, demeaned the intelligence and integrity of the trial judges, and eventually set itself up for a meltdown -- with CCMS- and a showdown with the Alliance.

The current Chief Justice selected the SEC to audit the AOC. The SEC did its job, with intelligence and integrity. Its findings are well supported and should be followed.

The state and federal constitutions put great trust in individual judges of this country.

Judges, not the AOC, carry constitutional authority in the courtroom and in their collective governance.

Independent judges, as well as juries, are the backbone of a democracy.

I urge the Chief Justice and Judicial Council to follow the recommendations in the SEC report.

Respectfully,
Laura Hammes, Judge Retired, San Diego Superior Court 1984-2006