

## **California Courts News Transcript**

Title: Council Sets Legislative Priorities and More

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The last Judicial Council meeting of 2010 focused on the future, setting 8 legislative priorities for the next year. That includes advocating for sufficient funding to keep the courts open, accessible and secure, as well as dependency council, probate conservatorship programs, and court interpreters.

Finance Director Stephen Nash presented staff recommendations for about \$200-million in special fund allocations for a variety of court programs, including about \$50-million for continued development and deployment of the statewide case management system – CCMS.

Sacramento Presiding Judge Steve White said he and a number of other judges would like to suspend CCMS and divert funding to court operations.

Hon Steve White, Sacramento Superior Court “Let’s stop. Let’s run the courts and wait on the expansion of CCMS.”

The Orange County Court reports a very positive experience with CCMS.

Alan Carlson, CEO Orange County Superior Court “It works and we couldn’t do without it.”

Hon. Robert Moss, Orange County Superior Court “We use it every day. I personally use it every day. When I hear judges say it’s somehow broken or ineffective, I just don’t understand where that comes from. It really does work and it works very well.”

The San Diego Court also wants CCMS to continue.

Mike Roddy, CEO San Diego Superior Court “I’ve got to find a way to present to the public the things they’ve come to expect, electronic filing, electronic access, paper on demand, information more quickly and easily than we currently do it today, and this is the plan that we’ve committed to now for almost 10 years. We need to see it through. It’s the only way forward.”

Stephen Nash, AOC Chief Financial Officer “We are at a critical point, with the product close to delivery, with early adopter deployments beginning. There could be substantial impacts if the project is interrupted.”

“All those in favor, aye, opposed, no.”

The Council adopted the 7 recommendations, with Los Angeles judges Edmon and Wesley voting no, after a rich exchange of facts, figures and perspectives.

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Ron Overholt, AOC Chief Deputy Director “The level of transparency in this branch is at the highest level, the level of debate can occur in a public forum, and informed decisions are made in that process.”

Other presenters were also sensitive to the difficult budget situation. Council members heard about progress being made by the Elkins Family Law Implementation Task Force.

Hon. Laurie Zelon “We are focusing on those things that can be done now, and can be done without funding, and holding for later those things that will require funding.”

The Commission for Impartial Courts reported: they felt the sting of budget cuts, too. The Commission is advocating to improve and expand civics instruction.

Hon. Ron Robie “In the California budget there was \$500,000 to revamp civics education in the California schools and the governor vetoed it.”

And Chief Justice Ronald George said his farewell to the Council. This was his last meeting before he retires.

Chief Justice Ronald George “It truly has been the most valuable but also at the same time enjoyable and worthwhile activity and I shall sorely miss all of that but I know that we’re in excellent hands with my successor Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye.”

The Chief Justice-elect takes office January 3rd.

I’m Leanne Kozak reporting in San Francisco for California Courts News.

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