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February 13, 2014

California Joint Legislative Audit Committee
Assembly Member Adam C. Gray, Chair
Committee Members
Fax (916) 319-2352

RE: Need for forensic audit of the Administrative Offices of the Courts (AOC) and the
Judicial Council (JC)

Honorable Chairman Gray and Committee Members,

I write to you today to urge your support of an independent forensic audit of the AOC and JC by State Auditor Elaine Howle. As I understand it, Assembly member Reginald Jones-Sawyer, who chairs the Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Public Safety, has recommended the overall audit of California's courts on behalf of the citizens of California.

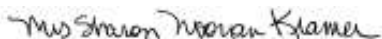
Such an audit is needed to assure that the AOC and JC are making the most of every dollar. I have recently read that the AOC has *"ballooned from a small corps of support staff for judges to a 1,000-strong behemoth that seemed to have its own agenda, high salaries, recurrent raises, well-appointed offices, an insular and opaque process and what trial judges characterized as an arrogant attitude towards the local courts. The audit will determine whether the judiciary actually needs a full \$1.2 billion or if money can be saved by looking at the administrative office budget."*

There is a presumption, somehow, in the capitol in Sacramento that the judicial branch is where it is now, with courtrooms closed and less services ... because somehow, they have mismanaged themselves into the situation. An independent forensic audit could help to establish if this presumption is correct. And if so, could assist the JC, AOC and the trial courts to cohesively better manage the judicial branch funds to give the people better access to justice.

While there are many worthy causes demanding the attention of state legislators in the best interest of California citizens, the judicial branch is the predicate for democracy. If there is no equal access to justice in California because of mismanagement of judicial branch funds, all other worthy causes can be adversely impacted.

As such, please grant Assembly member Jones-Sawyer's request for the Joint Legislative Audit Committee to order a State Audit of the AOC and JC on behalf of the citizens of California. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



fc: Assembly member Jones-Sawyer

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