



Judicial Council of California
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

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January 29, 2007

Ms. Diane F. Boyer-Vine
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State of California
State Capitol, Suite 3021
Sacramento, California 95814

Mr. Gregory P. Schmidt
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 400
Sacramento, California 95814

Mr. E. Dotson Wilson
Chief Clerk of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 3196
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: Annual Report of Special Funds Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2005–2006

Dear Ms. Boyer-Vine, Mr. Schmidt, and Mr. Wilson:

Pursuant to the reporting requirements set forth in Government Code section 77209 (j), regarding the Trial Court Improvement Fund, and in the Supplemental Report of the 2000 Budget Act, Item 0450-101-0932 – Trial Court Funding, pertaining to the Judicial Administration Efficiency and Modernization Fund, the Judicial Council respectfully submits the Annual Report of Special Funds Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2005–2006.

Funding provided by the Trial Court Improvement Fund and the Judicial Administration Efficiency and Modernization Fund represents an essential component of the judicial branch

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budget. These funding sources are the foundation to essential statewide services, ongoing technology programs and infrastructure initiatives, education and development programs, and provide the critical funding necessary to support innovative and model programs, pilot projects, and other special projects. The programs and initiatives detailed in this report highlight many of the judicial branch's efforts to ensure that all Californians have access to a fair system of open and equal justice.

Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Stephen Nash, Acting Director, Administrative Office of the Courts Finance Division, by phone at (415) 865-7584 or via e-mail at stephen.nash@jud.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

William C. Vickrey
Administrative Director of the Courts

WCV/BF

Attachments (11)

cc: Keely Martin Bosler, Consultant, Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review
Janus Norman, Senior Consultant, Assembly Budget Committee
Edgar Cabral, Fiscal and Policy Analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office
Zlatko Theodorovic, Assistant Program Budget Manager, Department of Finance
Members of the Judicial Council
Ronald G. Overholt, AOC Chief Deputy Director
Kathleen Howard, Director, AOC Office of Governmental Affairs
AOC Regional Administrative Directors
Stephen H. Nash, Acting Director, AOC Finance Division
Ruben Gomez, Manager, AOC Fiscal Administration and Technical Support Services
Eraina Ortega, Manager, AOC Office of Governmental Affairs

Report to the Judicial Council and the Legislature

**Annual Report of Special Funds Expenditures
For
Fiscal Year 2005–2006**

Pursuant to reporting requirements set forth in the
Government Code Section 77209(j)
(Trial Court Improvement Fund)
And
Supplemental Report of the 2000 Budget Act
(Judicial Administration Efficiency and Modernization Fund)

January 29, 2007

**Administrative Office of the Courts
William C. Vickrey, Administrative Director of the Courts**

**Report to the Judicial Council and the Legislature:
Annual Report of Special Funds Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2005–2006
January 29, 2007**

Introduction

The Trial Court Improvement Fund (Improvement Fund) was created to improve court management and efficiency, case processing, and timeliness of trials. Government Code section (GC) 77209 (Chapter 1211, Statutes of 1997), subsection (g), authorizes the Judicial Council (council) to administer monies deposited in the Improvement Fund and allows the council, “with appropriate guidelines,” to delegate administration of the fund to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). In accordance with GC 77209(g), the council has approved internal guidelines to provide management and staff with general policies and procedures for allocating funds from the Improvement Fund and tracking expenditures on an annual basis.

The Judicial Administration Efficiency and Modernization Fund (Modernization Fund), established by GC 77213 as part of the Trial Court Funding Act of 1997 (Stats. 1997, ch. 850), was created to support statewide initiatives for ensuring the highest quality of justice in all of California’s trial courts. Funding provided from the Modernization Fund is designated for use for projects that promote improved access to, efficiency of, and effectiveness in the trial courts.

Annual Report

In accordance with GC 77209(j), the council is required to annually report to the Legislature on the expenditures from the Improvement Fund. In addition, language in the Supplemental Report of the 2000 Budget Act (Item 0450-101-0932, Trial Court Funding) requested an annual reporting of expenditures from the Modernization Fund. In accordance with the statutory requirement and legislative intent expressed in the Supplemental Report, the council submits this report to the Legislature.

Funding Sources and Restrictions (refer to Attachments A and B)

The Improvement Fund (Attachment A, page 1) is continuously appropriated and has a variety of funding sources, including annual deposits from the 50/50 excess fees and fines split revenue, 2% automation fund, interest from the Surplus Money Investment Fund (SMIF), sale of documents and royalties from publications of jury instructions, other miscellaneous revenues, and a transfer from the Trial Court Trust Fund (TCTF). The transfer from TCTF has specific restrictions such as reserving at least one-half of the one percent transfer for a specified time-period unless allocated to a court or courts for urgent needs. The Modernization Fund (Attachment B, page 1) is appropriated annually in the state Budget Act.

For FY 2005–2006, expenditures from the special funds were made in the following categories:

Improvement Fund (refer to Attachment A, page 2)

• Ongoing Funding for Base Operations	\$28,387,614
• Ongoing Statewide Programs	67,315,171
• Trial Court Projects and Model Programs	9,151,609
• Emergency Funding Reserve	<u>1,271,329</u>
Total Expenditures by Category: <u>\$ 106,125,723</u>	

Modernization Fund (refer to Attachment B, page 1)

• Statewide Technology Projects	\$24,142,837
• Education and Developmental Programs	2,707,537
• Pilot Projects, Special Initiatives and Ongoing Programs	<u>6,328,470</u>
Total Expenditures by Category: <u>\$33,178,844</u>	

Fiscal Year 2005–2006 Expenditures and Encumbrances

Improvement Fund (refer to Attachment A, page 2)

In FY 2005–2006, the council expended \$106.126 million from the Improvement Fund. Most of the projects funded by the Improvement Fund represent ongoing efforts or initiatives that support current trial court operations, programs that most courts would not otherwise be able to provide or absorb within their existing funding. Since the passage of the Trial Court Funding Act of 1997 (Chapter 850, Statutes of 1997), the state has been responsible for funding trial court operations. Consonant with this change, the AOC has been responsible for developing and implementing a statewide infrastructure to provide services that were previously provided by the counties. The following four categories represent critical efforts of statewide importance as well as direct support for the trial courts provided from the Improvement Fund:

Category 1: Ongoing funding for Base Operations: \$28.388 million (refer to Attachment A, page 3)

The purpose of this funding is to support unfunded trial court operations and various operational needs, including:

- *Otherwise unfunded or under-funded trial court base operations and negotiated salary increases;*
- *2% Automation (automated record keeping system improvements pursuant to GC 68090.8);*
- *Funding for courts with insufficient resources;*

- *Funding to address FY 1996–1997 under-reported court operational costs; and*
- *Distribution to trial courts for establishing and enhancing collection programs*
 In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to provide one-time incentives for trial courts to establish or enhance their collection programs. In accordance with GC 77205(a) and California Rules of Court 6.105, the council must annually allocate 80 percent of the 50/50 excess split revenue deposited into the Improvement Fund that exceeds the amount deposited in FY 2002–2003 to the trial courts located in the counties from which the excess revenues were collected to fulfill one-time obligations and to address cash flow issues. During this reporting period, 39 trial courts benefited from this distribution.

Category 2: Ongoing Statewide Programs: \$67.315 million (refer to Attachment A, page 4)

Funding originally provided for ongoing statewide programs in prior fiscal years continued in FY 2005–2006 and newly approved programs and projects in FY 2005–2006 for the support of numerous innovative programs that enhance the provision of justice throughout the state. The ongoing programs and limited-term initiatives include the following:

- *Litigation Management Program (LMP)*
 GC 811.9 requires the council to provide for the representation, defense, and indemnification of the state's trial courts, trial court judicial officers, and employees. In order to fulfill this responsibility, the council established the Litigation Management Program to pay for defense and indemnification as required by the statute. The unexpended allocation will be carried over to the next fiscal year in order to cover pending obligations.

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to pay the costs of defense, including fees for attorneys from the Attorney General's Office and private counsel, and to pay the costs of settlements and judgments.

- *Commission on Judicial Performance (CJP) Defense Insurance*
 The Commission on Judicial Performance (CJP) Defense Insurance program was approved by the council as a comprehensive loss prevention program in 1999. The program is for the purposes of: 1) covering defense costs in CJP proceedings related to CJP complaints; 2) protecting judicial officers from exposure to excessive financial risk for acts committed within the scope of their judicial duties; and 3) lowering the risk of conduct that could develop into increased complaints through required ethics training for judicial officers.

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to provide cost effective, efficiently administered, and uniform insurance for all State of California justices, judges, and subordinate judicial officers.

➤ *Trial Court Transactional Assistance Program (TCTAP)*

The council established Trial Court Transactional Assistance Program (TCTAP) in July 2001 as a means by which the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) could provide transactional legal assistance to the trial courts through outside counsel selected and managed by the OGC. Subsequently, the council broadened authorized uses of TCTAP funds to include any legal services required by the trial courts relating to their operations. As part of the budget planning process, OGC determined that most legal services could be provided more economically by in-house counsel who could establish professional relationships with trial court personnel and develop institutional knowledge and expertise. Consequently, the council approved the decision to redirect a portion of the annual TCTAP budget to fund attorney and support staff positions in the Regional Offices beginning in January 2005.

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to pay for attorney fees and related expenses.

➤ *Employee Assistance Program for Bench Officers*

This program provided various assistance and support to the members of the program and their families in dealing with a wide range of personal, family and financial matters.

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to provide the Judicial Officers' Assistance Program to the justices, judges, commissioners, referees and assigned judges in the Supreme Court, Courts of Appeal and Superior Courts.

➤ *Trial Court Benefits Program (Third Party Administrator and Legal Service)*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to provide continued third party administrative (TPA) and legal services related to the Benefits Program currently provided to 27 trial courts with more than 4,600 employees. The TPA maintains the eligibility data base for all courts and vendors, bills and collects the premiums from the courts and disperses them to the appropriate benefit vendor. It also provides services to keep the program Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) compliant. The judicial branch does not currently have adequate staffing or ability to perform these services in-house.

➤ *Self-Represented Litigants – Strategic Planning*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to plan for implementation of judicial branch assistance for self-represented litigants. The council adopted an objective as part of its operational plan that every trial court should have an action plan for serving self-represented litigants. It also adopted an objective that the number of self-help centers should be increased. Over the last five years, 55

courts serving over 99 percent of California's population have participated in the program, preparing action plans for serving self-represented litigants. Forty-three courts have been given additional grants to help them implement all or part of their action plans. Ten courts have been able to start self-help centers using these funds as seed money. Others have developed brochures, videos, and other informational materials for self-represented litigants. These materials are available online to be shared or adapted by all courts.

➤ *Family Law Interpreter Program for Domestic Violence Cases*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to support interpreter services for litigants in family law cases where domestic violence protective orders have been issued or are being sought, in elder abuse cases where protective orders have been issued or are being sought, and in family law cases generally. Thirty-seven courts received funding through this program to provide services in court hearings, Family Court Services mediation proceedings, Family Law Facilitator sessions, and court-sponsored self-help settings. Participating courts used the funds to cover the costs of providing certified or registered interpreters (which includes their per diem or salary, benefits, and mileage), and to pay for interpreter coordinator services. The project also ensured that domestic violence related court forms were translated into Spanish, Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese. Feedback from participating courts indicates that the program has been extremely helpful in improving access to California's justice system, enhancing safety for domestic violence victims and children, and improving court efficiency by reducing the need for continuances of court hearings due to lack of interpreters.

➤ *Self-Help Centers*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to establish or expand self-help assistance. The distribution to the courts was based upon an average of population and the current funding for the family law facilitator program. Funding is being used primarily for staffing and allows for development of extensive services throughout the state. Also, a one-time grant was provided to the courts to fund videoconferencing equipment for services between self-help centers; publications, videos, and computer programs; equipment, furniture, and furnishings for self-help centers; signage; and duplication expenses for materials.

➤ *Local Court Planning*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to focus outcomes in two areas:

- 1) **Judicial Council Branchwide Strategic Planning:**
The efforts focused on collecting and organizing a vast quantity of stakeholder data to inform the council's development of a new strategic plan for California's judicial branch. AOC coordinated and conducted the council's annual branchwide planning meeting, and over 150 meeting attendees began the review and revision

of the strategic plan for the period 2006 through 2012. The council will adopt a new strategic plan in December 2006.

2) Public Trust and Confidence Research Initiatives:

AOC searched and hired researchers to initiate phase 2 of the landmark study—Trust and Confidence in the California Courts. Researchers conducted focus groups across the state to obtain direct information from court users who had personal experience within specific court venues (i.e., jury service, family or juvenile, civil or small claims, or traffic court.) Additional focus group surveys across the state were conducted to solicit input from judicial officers and court administrators to yield an insiders' perspective on the California courts as well as identify further possible means of improving the delivery of justice.

➤ Community-Focused Court Planning

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to hire professional consulting services to provide work products such as an instrumental guide for court staff and a curriculum to train court staff on conducting community outreach forums and to assist the courts with preparing for their community forums. In addition, the funds were allocated to the courts as mini-grants to assist the courts with hosting in-person forums with their local communities and major stakeholders. The purposes of the forums were to educate the public about the roles and responsibilities of the courts, act on the findings of the Public Trust and Confidence Survey, build public trust and confidence in the judicial branch, and assist the courts with updating their strategic plans and operational plans. The courts' plans range from hosting several in-person community forums to creating online virtual community sessions.

➤ On-line Training

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to purchase a variety of online courses that are provided to the trial courts as a part of the AOC's distance education efforts. In addition to online professional development courses and a website created by the AOC, the courses provide access to online libraries containing numerous on-demand software and professional development courses for court staff and judges

➤ Trial Court Security Grants

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to assist pre-transfer court facilities with funding for immediate security improvement needs. Emergency Response and Security (ERS) unit was able to complete two projects for the courts, which included providing the Superior Court of Shasta County with an updated, interoperable radio communication system, allowing officers to communicate from any point in the building and with other local agencies and first responders. Second, the Superior Court of Tulare County was provided with emergency preparedness kits to assist staff in preparing for disaster situations including evacuations, terrorist events, and sheltering in place. The unexpended

allocation will be carried over to the next fiscal year in order to complete numerous projects desperately needed by the courts, including upgrades to duress alarm systems, closed-circuit television (CCTV) monitoring, access control systems, ballistic-resistant screening in clerk's stations, and bench ballistic-resistant material.

Enormous progress has been made on the statewide technology initiatives and ongoing projects that support the objectives set forth by the Judicial Council in its Strategic and Operational Plans. Several information technology infrastructure projects are included as a significant component of the judicial branch's ongoing statewide initiatives (refer to Attachment A, Addendum 1). The majority of the funding in FY 2005–2006 was expended on the following projects:

➤ *California Case Management System (CCMS)*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to develop the California Case Management System (CCMS), a statewide initiative to bring the courts together to use a single application for all case types. The development and implementation of the CCMS will occur in phases, beginning with the criminal and traffic case types (V2), continuing with civil, small claims, probate and mental health (V3), and concluding with family and juvenile case types (V4). The Superior Courts of Los Angeles, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, and Ventura Counties were designated as lead courts participating in the design and development efforts. Other courts invited to participate in planning and design sessions include Monterey, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Francisco. The V2 product was accepted in September 2005. Fresno was the first court to deploy the product on July 3, 2006. There are currently six additional courts in the deployment planning process for V2 – Butte, Orange, Plumas, San Luis Obispo, Solano, and Sonoma. The V3 product was accepted in November 2005. Development of the mental health case type will begin in October 2006 and will be available for release in 2007. There are currently five courts in the deployment planning process for V3 – Los Angeles, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, and Ventura. The last phase of development, V4, will be the consolidation of all case types into one application.

➤ *Information Technology Infrastructure – Telecommunications*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to continue the implementation of telecommunications standards that were developed by the AOC working with the courts and telecommunications vendors. Over the past three years, 46 of the 58 courts were upgraded to meet these standards, which included new cabling plants, new network hardware, intrusion detection monitoring, training for IT staff, and segregation from their county networks. Efforts will continue this fiscal year with a focus on the Southern Region courts.

➤ *Court Accounting and Reporting System (CARS)*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to continue the implementation of this project, which spans multiple fiscal years. The project has allowed the branch to standardize its accounting and reporting functions, and provide timely and comprehensive financial information to all required parties. At the end of FY 2005–2006, CARS had been implemented in a total of 31 courts.

➤ *Statewide Planning and Deployment Support*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to complete transition plans for the 58 courts. The plans documented the current state of technology in each of the courts, particularly as it related to telecommunications, case management, and jury management. The plans also documented the technology staff support available either at the court or through their county. AOC has maintained its commitment to keep these plans current as they provide valuable information not only for the information technology projects but also for a number of other divisions. Other initiatives in progress include the next phase of the development of an Enterprise Architecture, which will provide a roadmap for how all of the various technology initiatives need to fit together from both a business and technology perspective. There are also plans to move beyond the basic efforts to develop a branch-wide security policy as it relates to both data and network security, which also serves to inform the efforts already underway for disaster recovery and continuity of business operations.

➤ *Court Human Resources Information System (CHRIS)*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to support the implementation efforts associated with a statewide offering of human resource and payroll functions that use the same operating platform that supports CARS. AOC's Human Resources Division worked with the courts and the Finance Division to expand the enterprise resource planning (ERP) system functionality to include human resources and payroll, and to pilot the system in one large trial court. In addition, the planning effort began for the next rollout of CHRIS to five additional courts. The ability to implement a true ERP provides enormous benefit to the branch in its management of both human and financial resources.

➤ *Interim Case Management System (CMS)*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to continue the deployment, maintenance, and support of interim case management systems which are certified as meeting both the state and local functional requirements. Trial courts further out in the deployment schedule for CCMS are being migrated to the California version of these certified products to ensure stability of critical court operations during this transition period. The work being done with these courts as it relates to data cleanup, data conversion, and interfaces with the justice partners will greatly facilitate the ability of these courts to move to CCMS.

➤ Data Integration and State Partners

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to continue the data integration program and to work with the trial courts to develop a statewide approach. These efforts included the following:

- Continued work on the data exchange standards, updating them as a result of work in San Luis Obispo. These standards include the data elements, data definitions, and the associated XML schema (successor to HTML web programming language).
- Completed installation of the Integration Services Backbone (ISB) in the California Courts Technology Center (CCTC), which will facilitate information exchanges between the courts and their justice partners.
- Incorporated SAP as a service option within the ISB.
- Began on the data abstraction layer of V2 for integration with ISB.
- Continued assisting courts with the Local Integration Assessment Methodology (LIAM) process to define justice partner integration needs. LIAM support was provided to Butte, Marin, San Luis Obispo and Solano courts.
- Worked with the AOC's Center for Families, Children, and the Courts (CFCC) Division to develop data exchange standards for family law case types.
- Used ISB to build transport utilities for moving files from the CCTC applications to the Department of Justice (DOJ), as well as other target sites.
- Completed data integration implementation of e-filing in three courts.
- Published a second version of the Second Generation E-Filing Specifications.
- Conducted a court e-filing functional workgroup to get recommendations on an implementation guide for the courts and on how e-filing should be implemented, including changes to the California Rules of Court.

➤ Information Technology Infrastructure – Court Technology Center

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to provide courts with comprehensive information technology support services. The CARS was hosted at the Technology Center, as well as the Sustain case management system and CCMS-Criminal. A major focus of FY 2005–2006 was to offer additional services in the areas of e-mail, desktop, disaster recovery, and voice hosting.

➤ Jury Management System

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to continue trial courts migration to the most recent version of two statewide jury systems. Over the last two fiscal years, over forty courts have been upgraded to the most current version of their vendor software. Many of those courts continue to add functionality to provide web access, integrated voice response systems, and check writing modules. The additional functions, where implemented, have saved the courts considerable staff time.

Category 3: Trial Court Projects and Model Programs: \$9.152 million (refer to Attachment A, page 5)

Funding was provided for various ongoing, limited-term, and one-time projects that support trial court operations as well as improve court management and efficiency, case processing, and timeliness of trials. The projects and programs include the following:

➤ *Audit Contract*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to continue and supplement an internal audit program that was approved by the council in FY 2001–2002. This program includes two components, internal and external audit resources. The first component was an internal audit unit within the Finance Division of the AOC, and the second component was a contract to external consulting and auditing firms to supplement the internal audit staff.

➤ *Judicial Branch Workers Compensation Program (JBWCP)*

The Judicial Branch Workers Compensation Program (JBWCP) was established to manage, on a statewide basis, workers compensation programs for court employees. To date, a total of 54 courts have joined the statewide program.

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to address outstanding tail claim liabilities with various counties, and program administration costs related to losses with dates of injury from January 1, 2001 to July 1, 2003 that related to court employees in certain courts.

➤ *Trial Court Healthcare Program*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to cover the shortfalls in the Medical Flexible Spending Account, a component of the trial court healthcare benefit program, and to continue consulting services related to continued development of the trial court healthcare benefit program.

➤ *ADP Master Agreement Contract*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to provide the trial courts with payroll services. This master contract allowed each of the trial courts to negotiate separate agreements with the vendor for payroll services. The allocated funds for this program helped 39 trial courts obtain services from four consultants dedicated for payroll services covering the period from November 2005 to October 2006.

➤ *Unified Courts for Families - Mentor Courts*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to create and support ongoing unified court systems that coordinate family, juvenile and related case types as part of a three-year pilot project. Through unified or coordinated family court systems, the model courts seek to improve access to the California justice system, expedite appropriate resolutions, provide safety and protection for victims, reduce

and eliminate duplication of court and court-connected services, ensure system accountability and integrity, increase efficiency and cost savings, and enhance public trust and confidence. Courts receiving funding participated in the original grant planning process that provided a basis for many courts to consider how to coordinate more effectively in family and juvenile matters. By coordinating these cases and providing case managers the opportunity to assist with coordination and service referrals, courts have reported a decrease in the number of hearings, more efficient handling of matters by combining more than one case type in some instances, and improved access to necessary services such as counseling.

➤ *Dependency Counsel Cost Recovery*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to create and support pilot cost recovery programs in two courts, Stanislaus and San Joaquin. Funds were used to hire a Fee Review Officer, who served both courts by determining whether parents in dependency proceedings, who were assessed fees for court-appointed representation in juvenile dependency cases, were eligible for a waiver of fees or would be required to pay. The Fee Review Officer was also charged with establishing monthly payment plans for eligible parties, as well as following up to ensure payment of assessed fees. A different model was developed for each of the courts; in Stanislaus, a fee-for-service model was implemented and in San Joaquin, a flat-fee model was implemented. The goal of the program was to determine which, if either, of the two models was cost-effective for recovering fees in these matters.

➤ *Domestic Violence Orders after Hearing Project*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to start piloting a computer software program, Family and Children Court Technology System (FACCTS), that allows the court to provide every party with a signed and filed order of protection at the time of their hearing without any requirement other than that the party be there to receive it. The software allows the court clerk to prepare and print the order on the mandatory Judicial Council forms as he or she prepares the minute order for the hearing. The order can then be submitted directly to the judge for signing, and the signed original filed. Both parties thus leave the courtroom with a signed and filed Order of Protection in hand. The program is being configured to interface with local case management systems so that case information will be automatically input for domestic violence calendars.

➤ *Effective Caseflow Management of Family and Juvenile Cases*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to contract with consultants to complete Family and Juvenile Delinquency Caseflow Management projects, respectively. The project aids in understanding effective caseflow management techniques and to assist the courts in applying those techniques to existing practices, in an effort to improve the timely disposition of cases. This project

includes first convening a working group of statewide experts and development of a survey of all courts, and the information is used to develop the materials and curriculum for a series of three workshops for small, medium, and large courts.

➤ *National Consortium Regarding Pro Se Litigation*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to develop the best practices, share resources, and develop mechanisms for finding federal funding of self-help centers. The funds were used to: 1) prepare a directory of approximately 140 self-help centers around the country and provide it both in hard copy and online to self-help centers and the public; 2) prepare drafts of documents describing best practices and useful resources for self-help services; 3) assist self-represented litigants in the courtroom; 4) develop a research toolkit for courts to conduct a self-assessment regarding their self-help programs; and 5) conduct research on judicial communication with self-represented litigants.

➤ *Baseline Information for Class Action Filings in California*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to initiate the first phase of baseline data collection on class-action lawsuits. The state judiciary currently has almost no information on this important, labor intensive, high-profile case type. Working with Distinguished Professor Richard Marcus at the University of California, Hastings College of the Law, consulting with researchers from the Federal Judicial Center (FJC), and working with a small group of law students from UC Hastings, OCR staff developed a data-collection instrument, field tested it, worked with court staff to identify class-action cases for which case file review would be conducted, and began data collection in the largest courts in the state. The project will continue through the fall of 2007 at which time a database of class-action filings from 2001 through 2006 will be available for analysis.

➤ *Regional Office Grants*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to provide for Regional Trial Court Opportunity Awards, administered through the three AOC regional offices. Courts submitted applications, and based on specific needs, overall benefit of programs to the public, and availability of funding, 30 courts were awarded grants for their programs. These programs supported trial court efforts to develop or expand services to ensure open and equal public access to the trial courts, and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of trial court operations. Courts were encouraged to utilize these funds to implement aspects of their local strategic and operational plans. Opportunity Award funds were fully disbursed to the courts upon execution of MOUs with their regional offices.

➤ *Trial Court Reimbursements for Administrative Infrastructure Needs*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to reimburse the actual costs of statewide administrative infrastructure which supports the trial courts in various

areas such as trial court financial services, trial court enhanced collection programs, regional office program assistance, ongoing statewide technology projects, and one-time increased costs for technology deployment on behalf of the trial courts. In accordance with GC 68085(a)(2)(A), all expended funds promoted the effective, efficient, reliable, and accountable operation of trial courts.

Category 4: Emergency Funding Reserve: \$1.271 million (refer to Attachment A, page 6)

➤ *Reimbursement of Extraordinary Costs in a Homicide Case*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to reimburse the extraordinary costs incurred by the Superior Court of San Mateo County as a result of the high profile homicide case of People vs. Peterson, which was moved from the Superior Court of Stanislaus County. Allowable costs such as travel expenses for judges; fees for reporters' transcript, and jury service; costs for prosecution, defense, and sheriffs; and prorated costs of additional equipment were reimbursed upon submittal of approved invoices. Costs that were not allowable include, but are not restricted to administrative indirect overhead, accounting, and auditing costs.

➤ *Advance Distribution to Law Library*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to meet urgent needs of trial courts to cover the statutory distribution to their local law library through a one-time advance from filing fees received in accordance with Business and Professional Code Section 6322 that requires the AOC to provide an advance, equal to 1/12th of the law library's total receipts from superior court filing fees for FY 2003–2004, to law libraries that certify, among other things, that they are experiencing financial hardship caused by an increase in the time between collection of a fee by the court and the receipt of the money by the law library resulting from the implementation of the new distribution method for money received from superior court filing fees.

Modernization Fund (refer to Attachment B, page 1)

In FY 2005–2006, the council expended \$33.179 million from the Modernization Fund. Funding provided by the Modernization Fund provides the primary support for critical technology projects (e.g., court technology staff, case management systems, data integration, and jury management systems), mandated and non-mandated education for judicial officers (e.g., orientation for new judges and continuing judicial studies), education for court administration and staff (e.g., court faculty program, and distance learning), and key local assistance initiatives (e.g., alternative dispute resolution, complex civil litigation programs, and remote interpreting services). A description of these projects follows:

Category 1: Statewide Technology Projects: \$24.143 million (refer to Attachment B, page 2)

The Modernization Fund allocation of \$24.143 million for statewide technology projects was allocated for various inter-related technology initiatives, including:

- *Statewide Planning and Deployment Support*
In FY 2005–2006, both Improvement Fund and Modernization Fund resources supported the statewide technology plan. (Refer to the Statewide Planning and Development Support item in the Improvement Fund section for details.)
- *Information Technology Infrastructure – Court Technology Center*
In FY 2005–2006, both Improvement Fund and Modernization Fund resources supported the court technology center. (See the Information Technology Infrastructure item in the Improvement Fund section for details.)
- *Court Human Resources Information System (CHRIS)*
In FY 2005–2006, both Improvement Fund and Modernization Fund resources supported the CHRIS project. (Refer to the Court Human Resource Information System item in the Improvement Fund section for details.)
- *Jury Management System*
In FY 2005–2006, both Improvement Fund and Modernization Fund resources supported the jury management system. (Refer to the Jury Management System item in the Improvement Fund section for details.)
- *Court Accounting and Reporting System (CARS)*
In FY 2005–2006, both Improvement Fund and Modernization Fund resources supported the CARS project. (Refer to the Court Accounting and Reporting System item in the Improvement Fund section for details.)

Information Technology Infrastructure - Court Technology Staff

In FY 2005–2006, one-time funding was provided to courts with no information technology staff or support from their counties. This funding support is extremely valuable to the courts and to the AOC.

- *Information Technology Infrastructure – Telecommunications*
In FY 2005–2006, both Improvement Fund and Modernization Fund resources were used to fund the cost of these infrastructure projects. (Refer to the Information Technology Infrastructure - Telecommunications item in the Improvement Fund section for details.)

➤ Data Integration

In FY 2005–2006, both Improvement Fund and Modernization Fund resources supported the data integration projects. (Refer to the Data Integration item in the Improvement Fund section for details.)

➤ Interim Case Management System (CMS)

In FY 2005–2006, both Improvement Fund and Modernization Fund resources supported the Interim CMS project. Funding from the Modernization Fund assists courts in upgrading existing software to a certified version on an interim basis while development of the CCMS continues. Justice partner interfaces, configuration, and data conversion work continued for the remaining two courts of 14 utilizing one Interim CMS vendor.

➤ California Case Management System (CCMS)

In FY 2005–2006, both Improvement Fund and Modernization Fund resources supported the CCMS project. (Refer to the California Case Management System item in the Improvement Fund section for details.)

Category 2: Educational and Developmental Programs: \$2.708 million (refer to Attachment B, page 3)

The council's strategic plan identifies education of judges, subordinate judicial officers, and non-judicial court staff as a significant means to advance the mission and goals of the judiciary in the areas of access, fairness, diversity, and ethics. With the increasing complexity of the law and court procedures, delivery of justice to the people of California requires judges and court personnel to be equipped with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable them to administer the justice system in a fair, effective manner that fosters public confidence. The allocations for education programs and statewide meetings fall into five general categories: Mandated State Education Programs for Judges, Non-Mandated Education Programs for Judges, Education/Training/Programs related to Court Administration, Education Programs for Court Staff, and Other Educational and Developmental Programs.

Funding for the following projects enables judges and subordinate judicial officers to participate in mandated and assignment-related educational programs. Additionally, this funding supports trial court staff training programs.

Mandated State Education Program

Orientation for New Trial Court Judges
B.E. Witkin Judicial College of California
Family Law Assignment Education
Juvenile Law Assignment Education
Ethics Training for Judges

Non-Mandated Education Programs

Fall Continuing Judicial Studies Program
Criminal Law and Procedure Institute
Cow County Judges Institute
Statewide Fairness Conference
Winter Continuing Judicial Studies Program
Computer Classes for Judges
Civil Law and Procedure Institute
Science and the Law Institute

Programs Related to Court Administration

Court Management Courses
California Judicial Administration Conference
Technical Assistance to Local Courts
Train the Trainers – Faculty Development
Training Coordinators Conference
Trial Court Faculty (Statewide Education Programs)

Programs for Trial Court Staff

Mid-level Management Conference
Court Clerk Training Institute
Distance Learning (Satellite Broadcast)
Trial Court Judicial Attorney Institute

Other Educational and Developmental Programs

Teen Courts and Beyond the Bench
Statewide Conference on Self-Represented Litigants
Orientation and Education for JC Advisory Committee Chairs
Trial Court Outreach – Visits to Council and AOC
New Judicial Officers Meeting for Judicial Branch Policies
Trial Court Financial Reports Training

Education and development funding from the Modernization Fund currently provides the costs of lodging and group meals for participants attending statewide education programs and conferences as well as mandatory education programs for judges and other non-mandatory education programs for judges, court executives, and other court staff. The funding also covers the development and transmission of broadcast programs.

Category 3: Pilot Projects, Special Initiatives, and Ongoing Programs: \$6.328 million (refer to Attachment B, page 4)

The provision of justice in the courts can be enhanced by improving access, efficiency, and effectiveness. In FY 2005–2006, the council again allocated funding from the

Modernization Fund to support innovative programs that enhanced the provision of justice, such as alternative dispute resolution programs; complex litigation programs, and a pilot program to facilitate access to the courts for non-English-speaking individuals in geographically isolated areas and to decrease the use of non-certified interpreters. Funding was also used to evaluate and make recommendations relating to the reporting of the record, support effective communications by updating the branch website, and improve jury management and data collection, including the establishment of model jury summons. The projects and programs include the following:

➤ *Alternative Dispute Resolution*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to continue the Civil Mediation and Settlement Program Grants project. This project is designed to expand the mediation and settlement programs for civil cases in California trial courts. The project helps courts meet the goal of section 32(a) of the Standards of Judicial Administration, which provides that all trial courts should implement mediation programs for civil cases as part of their core operations. It also implements the council’s February 2004 directive that AOC staff work with the superior courts to 1) assess their needs and available resources for developing, implementing, maintaining, and improving mediation and other settlement programs for civil cases, and 2) where existing resources are not sufficient, develop plans for obtaining the necessary resources. During this reporting period, two types of grants were awarded to trial courts: 1) eleven planning grants to conduct a needs assessment or plan a mediation or settlement program, and 2) nine implementation grants to implement a new mediation or settlement program or improve or expand an existing one.

➤ *Complex Civil Litigation Pilot Program*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to provide support for the Complex Civil Litigation Program, which began as a pilot project in January 2000. In August 2001, the council approved making this a permanent program and it is tasked with improving the management of complex civil cases. During this reporting period, the program involved 17 departments in the Superior Courts of Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Orange, San Francisco and Santa Clara Counties. The National Center for State Courts reported on the program in its Evaluation of the Centers for Complex Litigation Pilot Program. The lengthy report included information on the number of complex cases filed, the impact of the complex litigation departments on case and calendar management, the impacts on trial courts, attorneys, and parties, and recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor concerning complex litigation departments.

➤ *Self-Help Videos for the Website)*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to pay the costs of the server for videos for the public on issues such as how to prepare for a domestic violence

hearing and how to accomplish personal service of process. Videos of self-help programs that demonstrate the best practices were also made available on-line to assist other courts in developing programs.

➤ *Self-Represented Litigant Electronic Forms (Interactive Software)*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to help expand the availability of electronic document preparation programs to 38 of the 58 courts. This project also funded development of an expansion of the family law program to help litigants in divorce actions complete more steps of their case. The goal is to improve access to justice and the efficiency of the courts by enabling litigants to complete many legal forms using a simple question and answer process.

➤ *Self-Represented Litigant Forms*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to develop “plain language” forms and translation of commonly used forms. Major changes were made to forms used to establish guardianships and small claims actions to make them more user-friendly. Additionally funds were used to support a national document assembly server that will enable litigants to complete their forms on-line at no charge. Developed in collaboration with legal services programs, these interactive programs can be used in every county to help litigants complete pleadings in workshop settings more quickly and accurately.

➤ *California Drug Court Cost Analysis*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to pilot test the California Drug Court Cost Self Evaluation Tool (CSET). The CSET is a web-based tool that will allow drug courts to conduct their own cost-benefit analyses. Drug court teams from four drug courts (Laguna Niguel, San Joaquin, Santa Ana and Santa Clara) attended a day-long training and focus group at the AOC and input their data for analyses by the contractor. Results of the pilot test will be used to revise the CSET and prepare it for statewide launch. Additionally, funds were also used to create, print, and distribute a research publication on the first two phases of the cost analysis project. The publication was distributed at the National Association of Drug Court Professionals conference among other venues.

➤ *Assembly Bill (AB) 1108 – Substance Testing in Child Custody Cases*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to address the mandated study defined in AB 1108, which authorizes, until Jan 1, 2008, the courts to require any parent who is seeking custody of, or visitation with, a child to undergo testing for the illegal use of controlled substances and the use of alcohol under specified circumstances. This testing may be ordered by the court if there is a judicial determination that there is habitual, frequent, or continual illegal use of controlled substances or the habitual or continual abuse of alcohol by the parent or legal custodian. As a follow-up to the January, 2006 Family Law Judicial Officers

(FLJO) Survey, the CFCC research team is conducting a series of focus groups and interviews across the state to answer portions of a legislative charge. Three groups of people have been identified as potentially having information relevant to the questions of interest of the family law court: family court judicial officers, family law attorneys, and family court services mediators.

➤ *Small Claims Hotline Services*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to initiate and complete work regarding the interest of trial courts in collaborating on a small claims hotline. Staff also conducted and completed researches on other hotlines.

➤ *Presiding Judges and Court Executives Meetings*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to convene major statewide and individual meetings of the Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committees (TCPJAC) and Court Executives Advisory Committee (CEAC)/Conference of Court Executives (COCE). These meetings provided a forum for the presiding judges, assistant presiding judges, court executives, and other court leaders to discuss and consider both local and statewide court administration issues affecting trial court operations. Among the topics of discussion were committee governance, State Appropriations Limit, new trial court judgeships, probate conservatorship, domestic violence, fee waivers, minimum judicial education requirements, and court facilities.

➤ *Kleps Award Program*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to produce the prestigious Ralph N. Kleps Awards luncheon ceremony, attended by over 800 guests, at which awardees were recognized in September 2005. Allocated funds were also used to develop and distribute materials on innovations at the Knowledge Fair and State Bar vendor exhibits associated with the Statewide Conference. In response to a priority expressed by the Kleps Awards committee, a consultant was hired to create comprehensive reference materials on program development and evaluation. The book, *Innovations in the California Courts: Models for Administering Justice*, was printed and distributed to California and national court leaders. This book profiles replicable court innovations and statewide initiatives in California, including projects that recently have been recipients of the Ralph N. Kleps Awards. The book also contains statewide initiatives designed to promote advances in infrastructure, management, communications and other aspects of the day-to-day business of the California courts.

➤ *Jury Management - Model Summons*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to provide technical assistance and design consultation services to the trial courts as they converted to the model jury service summons and evaluated its effectiveness. Nine trial courts, including

the Superior Courts of Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Francisco, and San Joaquin Counties, are using the model summons to contact jurors. The Superior Courts of Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco Counties signed an agreement to use a joint summons and contract with a single vendor to perform printing and mailing operations for the courts. It is estimated that this agreement will save the courts a combined \$300,000 annually. The agreement also included language that permits additional courts to join the contract after one year. Funds were also used to make needed technology upgrades to many jury assembly rooms across the state for the purpose of showing jurors an orientation video entitled *Ideals Made Real*.

➤ *Remote Interpretive Services*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to provide trial courts with limited court interpreter resources with the services of qualified interpreters via telephone. Funds were expended for the purchase and installation of telephonic interpreting equipment, and training in its proper use. The equipment will enable courts with numbers of available certified interpreters to provide interpretation services telephonically to courts in remote locations. A web-based bulletin board has been designed and implemented to facilitate scheduling of assignments and track program participation. Also, an interpreter recruitment campaign is being coordinated by New America Media, an editorial and marketing association of more than 400 ethnic news organizations. The campaign involves multi-lingual ad placements under the theme “One Law, Many Languages” as well as ethnic media announcement sessions in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and the Central Valley with the editors and reporters of the AOC’s ethnic media partners present or available to discuss the most effective ways of communicating the profession of court interpreters. The advertisements targets seven specific languages: Arabic, Cantonese, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

➤ *Branchwide Communications Planning*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to engage a communications management agency to facilitate and conduct interviews and focus groups with court leaders. The purpose of those interviews was to document and assess the effectiveness of numerous channels of communication. The outcome of the study was a branchwide communications plan entitled: *California Courts Connected*. This document analyzed the various channels of communication and was aimed at streamlining and enhancing each of those channels. The document formulated three models that represented the exchange of information among stakeholders: JC/AOC to Courts, Courts to JC/AOC, and Courts to Courts, and proposed enhancements to the way is communicated and exchanged information throughout the branch. Currently, a Phase II study is in the planning stages to focus more on stakeholder groups outside the branch, including justice partners, legal organizations, and legislative staff with other state departments.

➤ *Institutionalization of the Judicial Council Operational Plan*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to provide the resources for publication and distribution of the Judicial Council Operational Plan to the trial courts, and education of court staff about branchwide objectives. The council's three-year Operational Plan articulates high-priority, state-level objectives and outcomes that support the branch's long term strategies as identified in their judicial branch strategic plan. To be effective, the operational plan must be widely shared with, understood by, and supported by court management. The provided funds were also used for printing and distribution of the final operational plan to court leaders as well as design, production, and distribution of the operational plan summary to court leaders, professional staff, and other justice system partners.

➤ *Promising Practices*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to complete four projects:

1) Northern Region Appellate Division Project:

The Northern Region Appellate Division Project established an appeals processing center that serves the Superior Courts of Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, and Sierra Counties. Funds were used to pay for the operating costs to process appeals from these courts that do not have sufficient workload to justify dedicated staff to such duties. The appeals processing center is housed at the Superior Court of Lassen County, and processes limited civil, misdemeanor criminal, traffic infraction, and appellate division decision appeals. During this reporting period, this project processed 10 appeals.

2) The California Justice Corps Project:

The Justice Corps program is administered by the AOC with federal Ameri-Corps funding from the California Service Corps. The program recruits, trains, and places undergraduate university students to be assistants in court-based legal access self-help centers. In Los Angeles court, funds were used to purchase supplies, including tables, chairs, cubicle dividers and computer workstations for the self-help services space dedicated inside the Stanley Mosk courthouse. In Alameda court, funds were provided to launch the implementation and act as the lead for a new Bay Area Justice Corps program, which will also include San Francisco and San Mateo counties.

3) Public Trust and Confidence Research Initiatives:

Funds were used to defray researcher's costs to initiate phase 2 of the landmark study—*Trust and Confidence in the California Courts: A Survey of the Public and Attorneys* described in detail above. Activities conducted by researchers included interviews of community and business leaders, appellate and retired justices, and experts in private alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services.

4) Judicial Council Branchwide Strategic Planning:

Funds were used to hire professional consulting services to collect, organize and perform a gap analysis of stakeholder data including trial court strategic plans, advisory committee performance plans, and responses to the *Trust and*

Confidence in the California Courts: A Survey of the Public and Attorneys survey responses to inform the Judicial Council's development of a new 2006-2012 strategic plan for California's judicial branch.

➤ *Trial Court Performance Measures Study*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to collaborate with consultants from the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) developing workload measures for non-judicial staff in the trial courts. The workload measures are part of a project to develop a method for allocating resources to the trial courts that takes into account workload. A report drafted by the NCSC documenting the process of implementing the CourTools (10 fundamental measures of court performance) in the Superior Courts of San Joaquin and San Mateo Counties based on extensive field work conducted: 1) multiple site visits to the two courts and meetings with court administrators to launch and define the projects and deliverables; 2) transfer of case management system data from the courts to the NCSC and AOC; 3) data cleaning and analysis to evaluate effective case management practices including on-time case processing, time-to-disposition, and caseload clearance; 4) survey research with court staff on employee satisfaction and goal alignment between the court's mission, its administration and line staff; and 5) survey research with court users to determine the extent to which the court provides access to justice and is perceived as operating fairly. NCSC staff also provided interim reports on the findings from the employee satisfaction and user satisfaction survey. Additional work on performance measures focused on a specific case type--conservatorships. A data collection instrument was finalized for this project.

➤ *High Priority Media Relations Projects*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to conduct a statewide media campaign to educate the public about the council's adoption of new Criminal Jury Instructions in August 2005. The main purpose of the campaign was to improve public trust and confidence in the courts by building awareness of ongoing reforms in the state jury system and to encourage potential jurors to take part in this important civic duty. The low percentage of eligible jurors who show up when called for jury duty is a problem across the country. The focus of this campaign was to communicate that criminal jury instructions have been rewritten in plain-English, as an option to the complicated legalese used in criminal trials for decades. Therefore, it will be easier for jurors to understand legal proceedings when they serve as jurors. National, state, and regional publications and electronic media carried this story, which is an important measurement of a successful campaign. Also, two Juror Appreciation Week events were coordinated in San Francisco and Los Angeles to mark Juror Appreciation Week, a week set aside by the Legislature to celebrate the important role that jurors play in our democratic system of government.

➤ *Innovative and Effective Practices*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to complete two projects:

1) Effective Practices in Criminal Caseflow Management Project:

This project was created in response to a request from the trial courts for operational technical assistance to enhance existing caseflow management. A project consultant was hired to assist a project planning team from the AOC, trial courts, and appellate courts to develop workshops scheduled throughout the state. Phase 2 of the project has focused on the provision of technical assistance to 13 trial courts that have undertaken initiatives to improve criminal caseflow management. Three follow-up, one-day workshops were held for small, mid-size, and large courts in the spring of 2006.

2) Records Management Improvement Plan Project:

This project was created in response to a request from the trial courts for operational technical assistance on promising court records management practices. Regional meetings were held with trial court representatives, as well as representatives from various AOC divisions, to begin addressing significant court records management issues such as regional off-site records storage, reduction of leased storage in counties, standardized records management policies and procedures for the trial courts, and coordination of records creation/retention issues with the development of the CCMS.

➤ *Branch Communications – California Courts Website*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to undertake a Web Assessment survey to lay the foundation for a redesign and reengineering of judicial branch web properties. In conjunction with numerous efforts throughout the country to improve e-government services, the AOC Web Assessment officially kicked off in March 2006, after Human Factors International was selected through the RFP process to help conduct and coordinate the assessment. The Web Assessment was aimed at gathering a better understanding of who the users are, how they use the sites, and what level of satisfaction they currently have. Using this information, along with stakeholder insights about how the AOC aims to leverage the web to achieve its objectives, the Office of Communications began a redesign of all web properties throughout 2006-07 to help improve our online communications channel. The Web Assessment has provided a key roadmap for what changes need to be made and has provided tactical recommendations on how to improve ease-of-use across all our sites.

➤ *Court Interpreters' Program – Testing Development and Implementation*

In FY 2005–2006, allocated funds were expended to enable the council to fulfill its mandate in providing competent interpreter services in the courts. This project coordinated the program for the administration of the court interpreter certification and registration, test development, administrative planning and scheduling, written and oral interpreter certification examinations, processing, scoring feedback and

appeals, recruitment, and outreach. Currently, the council provides testing in the twelve designated languages: Mandarin, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Japanese, Arabic, Cantonese, Korean, Western Armenian, Eastern Armenian, Portuguese and Tagalog. The council also provides testing in English. The council is also conducting a comprehensive review of the interpreter examinations and is in negotiations for a new test administrator.

Conclusion

During the past decade, the judicial branch has undergone dramatic and fundamental structural changes, including the switch from county funding to state funding of the trial courts along with subsequent improvements in branch's budget process, the unification of 220 municipal and superior courts into 58 court systems—one in each county. All these changes have been encouraged and embraced as part of the judicial branch's focus on creating a strong judicial branch that is better equipped to comprehensively deliver justice to all Californians.

Funding from the Improvement and Modernization Funds continues to represent a vital component of the judicial branch budget to ensure equal access to fair and consistent justice across the state.