



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF
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NEWS RELEASE

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Public Forum Today to Focus on Preserving Fair and Impartial Courts

***First-of-a-Kind Forum Looks at Political Pressures
That Threaten the Neutrality of California Courts***

California Channel Broadcasts Hearing Live

Sacramento—The Commission for Impartial Courts today will hold a public forum on the political pressures on courts that threaten the fairness and impartiality of the judicial branch and equal access to justice.

The first-of-a-kind hearing will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Secretary of State's office, 1500 11th Street, Sacramento. It will be broadcast live by the California Channel, a public affairs cable network with 5.6 million viewers. Online broadcasts are also available on the network's Web site: www.calchannel.com.

Chaired by California Supreme Court Justice Ming W. Chin, the Commission for Impartial Courts is studying the importance of impartial and accountable courts that make decisions based on the evidence and the law, free of outside influences.

Ten prominent leaders from government, the justice system, and the civic and academic communities will address the commission. They are:

- Hon. Gray Davis, former Governor of California
- Hon. Pete Wilson, former Governor of California
- Hon. Don Perata, President pro Tempore of the California Senate
- Hon. Thomas J. Moyer, Chief Justice of Ohio
- Hon. Ira R. Kaufman, President, California Judges Association
- Mr. Jeffrey L. Bleich, President, State Bar of California
- Professor Kathleen M. Sullivan, Stanford Law School
- Professor Laurie L. Levenson, Loyola Law School

(more)

- Mr. Manny Medrano, Reporter/Anchor, KTLA News, Los Angeles
- Ms. Mary G. Wilson, President, League of Women Voters of the United States

Information gathered at the public forum will be used by the commission's four task forces in their ongoing study of judicial selection and retention, judicial candidate campaign conduct, judicial campaign finance, and public information and education. The commission is expected to submit an interim report to the Judicial Council at a public meeting in August 2008. More information on the commission is available on the California Courts Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/tflists/commimpart.htm.

For further details on the public hearing, please call Philip Carrizosa of the Administrative Office of the Courts, Office of Communications, at 415-865-8044 or 415-865-7740.

Notice to Media: *Interviews with many speakers will be available today at the public forum. A press pool will be provided for TV and radio stations. For satellite information, call James Gualtieri, at (916) 444-9792, Ext. 7.*

The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.

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