

Item SP12-05 Response Form

Title: Strategic Evaluation Committee Report

The Strategic Evaluation Committee (SEC) was appointed by Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye in March 2011 to conduct an in-depth review of the AOC with a view toward promoting transparency, accountability, and efficiency. The Chief Justice received the report and recommendations on May 25. At its meeting on June 21, 2012, the Judicial Council accepted the report and directed that it be posted for public comment for 30 days. Comments received will be considered public and posted by name and organization.

PLEASE NOTE that all comments will be posted to the branch web site at www.courts.ca.gov as submitted by the commentator as soon as reasonably possible after receipt.

To Submit Comments

Comments may be entered on this form or prepared in a letter format. If you are *not* submitting your comments directly on this form, please include the information requested below and the proposal number for identification purposes. Because all comments will be posted as submitted to the branch web site, please submit your comments by email, preferably as an attachment, to: invitations@jud.ca.gov

Please include the following information:

Name: Dianna Gould-Saltman **Title:** Judge

Organization: Los Angeles Superior Court

Commenting on behalf of an organization

General Comment: As a judge appointed just over two years ago I have spent this time on the bench not only learning and practicing my new relationship to the law but understanding the functioning of the branch. I was heartened that the Chief Justice saw fit to investigate problems that had been raised regarding the appropriate functioning of the AOC as well as the efficient and effective use of the ever-swindling branch resources. I was further appreciative that the Chief Justice made the effort to select a cross-section of highly respected bench officers who represent different geographic areas of the state, different ethnic groups and likely different political philosophies. The result of an investigation by a body with such depth of experience and knowledge is thus most significant because of the diversity of its members and their shared interest in making this branch the effective, efficient, and perhaps most importantly, respected branch of government it can be.

The recommendations of the SEC are quite specific. To me this demonstrates the depth of information they acquired conducting their investigation and considered before making any recommendations. Notwithstanding their different backgrounds this body spoke clearly and with one voice. Their recommendations are well-supported and consistent

DEADLINE FOR COMMENT: 5:00 p.m., Sunday, July 22, 2012

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with the charge they were given. Some of their recommendations may be harsh and difficult to accept. I would imagine that harsh criticism is difficult to write but, if they took their charge seriously, which they clearly did, the recommendations they made were submitted with the knowledge that this might make them targets of criticism themselves. That possibility did not deter them from doing their jobs. Is this not the precise task we, as bench officers, undertake each day: to do that which is right and consistent with our charge even in the face of likely criticism to ourselves?

The mark of an excellent leader is to select the appropriate people to undertake difficult tasks and then to trust those to whom those tasks are delegated. If we are to have a strong branch we should be able to trust our Chief Justice and we would hope that she trusts her own judgment in having selected the best people to conduct the investigation into the AOC and provide her with well-supported recommendations. They have done their job. It is now time for the Judicial Council to do theirs. I strongly support adoption of the recommendations of the SEC. Implementation of those recommendations will go a long way to addressing both the deficits they found and public perception of the quality of the Judicial Branch.

Specific Comment - Recommendation/Chapter Number:

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