Judicial Council *of* California

520 Capitol Mall, Suite 600 · Sacramento, California 95814-4717
Telephone 916-323-3121 · Fax 916-323-4347

PATRICIA GUERRERO
Chief Justice of California
Chair of the Judicial Council

MS. SHELLEY CURRAN
Administrative Director

June 6, 2024

Hon. Ash Kalra
Chair, Assembly Judiciary Committee
1020 N Street, Room 104
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: Senate Bill 1141 (Niello), as amended June 5, 2024—Support

Dear Assembly Member Kalra:

The Judicial Council is pleased to support Senate Bill 1141, to increase the existing maximum amount in controversy that allows a case to be ordered into mediation by a court from $50,000 to $150,000 and to add prerequisites which must be met before such an order is made, because it will allow disputes with relatively small amounts in controversy to have a potentially lower cost means of resolution, providing efficiencies to the courts and allowing timely and cost-effective dispute resolution for the public.

The Judicial Council supported the original legislation Senate Bill 401 (Lockyer; Stats. 1993, ch. 1261) that created the court-ordered mediation provisions to resolve cases in a cost-effective manner. SB 1141 ameliorates the urgent problem of court backlog by updating this 30-year-old statute to a figure slightly above the inflation-adjusted cap and aligns with the increase in the limited civil jurisdictional threshold enacted last year by Senate Bill 71 (Umberg; Stats. 2023, ch. 861). Under current law, court ordered mediation is only allowed for unlimited civil matters, so the current $50,000 limit is very narrow and would only allow for this service to be provided when the amount in controversy is between $35,000 and $50,000.

The Judicial Council is focused on providing high quality service to the public and SB 1141 furthers this goal because it will allow more cases to be referred to mediation, potentially easing court workload and ensuring timely adjudication of cases.

For these reasons, the Judicial Council supports SB 1141.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Heather Resetarits at 916-323-3121.

Sincerely,

Cory T. Jasperson
Director
Governmental Affairs

CTJ/HR/ad
cc: Members, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Hon. Roger Niello, Member of the Senate, 6th District
Ms. Alison Merrilees, Chief Counsel, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Mr. Daryl Thomas, Consultant, Assembly Republican Office of Policy
Mr. Jith Meganathan, Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor
Ms. Shelley Curran, Administrative Director, Judicial Council of California

Judicial Council *of* California

520 Capitol Mall, Suite 600 · Sacramento, California 95814-4717
Telephone 916-323-3121 · Fax 916-323-4347

PATRICIA GUERRERO
Chief Justice of California
Chair of the Judicial Council

MS. SHELLEY CURRAN
Administrative Director

April 23, 2024

Hon. Thomas J. Umberg
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
1021 O Street, Room 3240
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: Senate Bill 1141 (Niello), as introduced—Support
Hearing: Senate Judiciary Committee—April 30, 2024

Dear Senator Umberg:

The Judicial Council is pleased to support Senate Bill 1141, to increase the existing maximum amount in controversy that allows a case to be ordered into mediation by a court from $50,000 to $150,000, because it will allow disputes with relatively small amounts in controversy to have a potentially lower cost means of resolution, providing efficiencies to the courts and allowing timely and cost-effective dispute resolution for the public.

The Judicial Council supported the original legislation Senate Bill 401 (Lockyer; Stats. 1993, ch. 1261) that created the court-ordered mediation provisions to resolve cases in a cost-effective manner. SB 1141 ameliorates the urgent problem of court backlog by updating this 30-year-old statute to a figure slightly above the inflation-adjusted cap and aligns with the increase in the limited civil jurisdictional threshold enacted last year by Senate Bill 71 (Umberg; Stats. 2023, ch. 861). Under current law, court ordered mediation is only allowed for unlimited civil matters, so the current $50,000 limit is very narrow and would only allow for this service to be provided when the amount in controversy is between $35,000 and $50,000.

The Judicial Council is focused on providing high quality service to the public and SB 1141 furthers this goal because it will allow more cases to be referred to mediation, potentially easing court workload and ensuring timely adjudication of cases.

For these reasons, the Judicial Council supports SB 1141.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Heather Resetarits at 916-323-3121.

Sincerely,

Cory T. Jasperson
Director
Governmental Affairs

CTJ/HR/ad
cc: Members, Senate Judiciary Committee
Hon. Roger Niello, Member of the Senate, 6th District
Ms. Margie Estrada, Chief Counsel, Senate Judiciary Committee
Mr. Morgan Branch, Consultant, Senate Republican Office of Policy
Mr. Jith Meganathan, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor
Ms. Shelley Curran, Administrative Director, Judicial Council of California