



*Superior Court*  
State of California  
County of Lake  
255 N. Forbes Street  
Lakeport, California 95453  
707-263-2374

ANDREW S. BLUM

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESIDING JUDGE

\_\_\_\_\_  
KRISTA D. LEVIER

\_\_\_\_\_  
COURT EXECUTIVE/CLERK  
JURY COMMISSIONER

December 11, 2018

Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee

Re: Item 1 Court Appointed Dependency Counsel Allocation Methodology for Small Courts 2019-20

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing to express our strong support for the staff recommendation to adopt the current methodology on an ongoing basis.

The current methodology has allowed Lake to retain experienced dependency counsel. Retention of these attorneys has provided qualified, trained and experienced dependency attorneys for the children and families we serve. If this recommendation is not approved, Lake's dependency counsel funding will be reduced by approximately 60%. At this reduced funding, it will be almost impossible to retain the experienced attorneys we have in our juvenile court today. As a small rural court, it is already difficult to recruit and retain experienced, qualified attorneys. This problem is exacerbated because dependency attorneys funded at this reduced level will need to secure other sources of income that will reduce their dependency caseload attention. In addition, it is not worth an attorney's time to maintain training and keep current in complex dependency law for a caseload that provides a very limited portion of their income.

The recommendation before you today will prevent these devastating consequences in Lake County and many other small courts statewide at a minimal statewide cost.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Krista LeVier  
Court Executive Officer