



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

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September 8, 2022

Hon. Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: Assembly Bill 1981 (Lee) — Request for Signature

Dear Governor Newsom:

The Judicial Council respectfully requests your signature on AB 1981, which seeks to increase the travel reimbursement that jurors receive to include roundtrip mileage, not just one-way travel to court as currently provided in statute. The bill also provides jurors and prospective jurors with free access to public transportation, or alternatively, a public transit reimbursement of up to a daily maximum of twelve dollars (\$12).

Additionally, the proposed pilot program will allow the branch to study the impact that increased juror per diem rates may have on jury participation. The bill requires the Judicial Council to select at least six trial courts, in counties with regional and geographic diversity, including the County of Alameda, to participate in the pilot program.

Both the increase in mileage and public transit reimbursement as well as the pilot program to study increased juror per diem rates will require funding for implementation.

The legislation supports Goal I (Access, Fairness and Diversity) and Goal IV (Quality of Justice and Service to the Public) of the [Strategic Plan for California's Judicial Branch](#). Specifically, AB 1981 advances those goals by promoting policies designed to increase access, fairness, and diversity in the courts and better serve the needs of California's diverse population.

Fiscal Impact

The Judicial Council estimates AB 1981 would have a fiscal impact of \$31 million.

The five-year average expenditure allocation for juror mileage reimbursement is \$3.6 million annually. The provisions of the bill that double the juror travel reimbursement and provide jurors with free access to public transportation will increase annual costs of approximately \$4 million for the branch.

Additionally, the pilot program will cost approximately \$27 million for the duration of the two-year program. In order to be effective, the pilot should be conducted in a variety of courts representing counties of different sizes, geographic locations and demographics.

For these reasons, the Judicial Council requests your signature on AB 1981.

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

Sincerely,



Cory T. Jaspersen
Director, Governmental Affairs

CTJ/SR/Imm

cc: Hon. Alex Lee, Member of the Assembly, 25th District
Ms. Jessica Devencenzi, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor
Mr. Martin Hoshino, Administrative Director, Judicial Council of California
Ms. Shelley Curran, Chief Policy & Research Officer, Judicial Council of California