
FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2013 AGENDA—BUSINESS MEETING

DISCUSSION AGENDA (ITEMS O–R)

Item O Trial Court Budget: Final Report of the Trial Court Funding Workgroup

In a joint letter dated September 19, 2012, the Governor and the Chief Justice announced the creation of a new working group to “evaluate the state’s progress in achieving the goals of the Lockyer-Isenberg Trial Court Funding Act of 1997.” The charge of the Trial Court Funding Workgroup (TCFW) was “to ascertain whether the goals of the Trial Court Funding Act have been met, and to propose options to the Judicial Council to effectively meet and maintain the goals of having a state-funded trial court system and enhance transparency and accountability.” The TCFW recommends that the Judicial Council accept the workgroup’s report to the council and the Governor and begin the process of examining and implementing its recommendations.

Council action

The Judicial Council accepted the report of the TCFW and adopted all 18 of its recommendations (Attachment 3 to these minutes). The council also took the following actions:

1. Referred to the E&P for review, appropriate action, and timely recommendations to the council: Recommendations 1, 2, and 13 in the TCFW report to address identifying and implementing statewide priorities and policies, including policies on physical access to courts—all to promote greater access to justice.
2. Approved the establishment of a new task force to review, take appropriate action, and make timely recommendations to the council on some of the non-funding related aspects of: Recommendations 3, 12, 14, 16, and 17 related to developing and promoting efficiencies, cost containment, accountability, and transparency based on relevant data and indicators to assess if courts are operating efficiently and promoting equal access to justice. The task force is to be subject to a specific sunset date.
3. Referred to the Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee to review, take appropriate action, and make timely recommendations to the council: Recommendations 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 18 related to the new methodology to allocate funding, the development of funding priorities, and ensuring greater transparency in funding decisions. With regard to recommendation 9(c), the Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee shall coordinate with the Judicial Council Technology Committee.
4. Referred to the SB 56 Working Group to review, take appropriate action, and make timely recommendations to the council: Recommendations 5 and 11 related to

developing performance indicators or metrics to demonstrate effective and accountable use of resources and provide decision makers information on how resources are or can be used to increase access to justice.

5. Referred to the Trial Court Presiding Judges and Court Executives Advisory Committees to review, take appropriate action, and make timely recommendations to the council: Recommendation 15 related to identifying remaining vestiges of the pre- unification period that are inefficient or result in unnecessary costs.

6. Directed the Administrative Director of the Courts to work with E&P to assess—and report back to the council in June—resources required to provide necessary and appropriate levels of staff support to the various committees tasked with following up on the recommendations of the Trial Court Funding Workgroup so as to be able to timely and effectively implement the directives in the various committees.