

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF GEORGIA

General Session

Tuesday, August 28, 2007

Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place Hotel

9:00 a.m.

Gwinnett & Hall Ballrooms



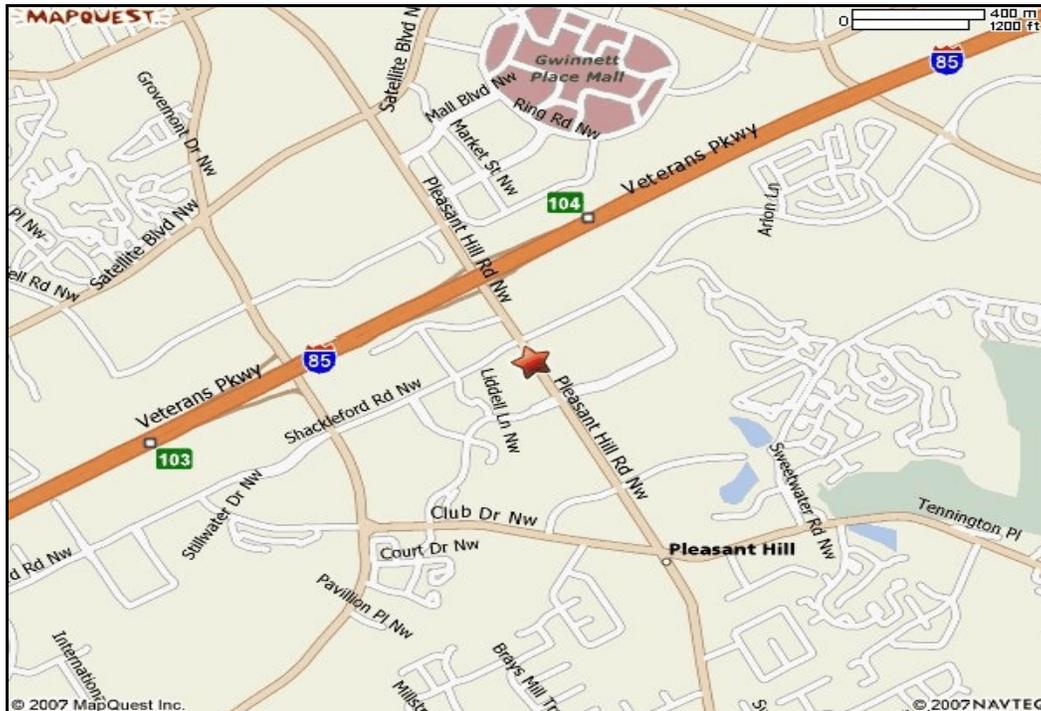
Luncheon

12 Noon

Georgia Ballroom, Salon 6-8

*1775 Pleasant Hill Road at Crestwood
Duluth, Georgia 30096*

***Driving Directions to Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place Hotel
1775 Pleasant Hill Road at Crestwood
Duluth, GA 30096
770-935-3859***



From North Georgia Traveling Southbound on I-85

Continue South on I-85 to Exit 104 (Pleasant Hill Road). At top of exit ramp turn left and travel approximately 1/4 mile. After crossing Shackleford Road, NW / Breckinridge Blvd., NW take the 1st right (Crestwood Parkway, NW). The hotel will be on your right.

From North Georgia Traveling Southbound on I-75

Continue South on I-75 to I-285 Eastbound. Exit onto I-85 Northbound and continue to Exit 104 (Pleasant Hill Road). At top of exit ramp turn right and travel 1/4 mile. After crossing Shackleford Road, NW / Breckinridge Blvd., NW take the 1st right (Crestwood Parkway, NW). The hotel will be on your right.

From South Georgia Traveling Northbound on I-85

Continue north on I-85 to Exit 104 (Pleasant Hill Road). At top of exit ramp turn right and travel 1/4 mile. After crossing Shackleford Road, NW / Breckinridge Blvd., NW take the 1st right (Crestwood Parkway, NW). The hotel will be on your right.

From South Georgia Traveling Northbound on I-75

Continue north on I-75 merging onto I-85 Northbound. Follow directions above.

From I-20 East or I-20 West

From I-20 merge onto I-85 Northbound and follow directions above.

Judicial Council of Georgia
Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place
Duluth, GA 30096

Tuesday, August 28, 2007
9:00 a.m.

Continental Breakfast will be served beginning at 8:00 a.m.

1. **Introductions and Preliminary Remarks**
(Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears, Est. Time—5 Min.)
 2. **Approval of June 12, 2007 Minutes** Tab 1
(Chief Justice Sears, Est. Time—3 Min.)
 3. **Analysis of Calendar Year 2006 Case Census Data** Tab 2
**Presented to the Judicial Council of Georgia to Support
the Need for Additional Judgeships and Alteration of
Circuit Boundaries**
(Mr. Ratley, Dr. Arnold, Ms. Pete, Est. Time—30 Min.)
- Memorandum:** Explanation of Judgeship Need Assessment Documents Page 3
- A. **Judicial Council Policy for Judgeship & Circuit Boundary Studies** Page 8
 - B. **Supreme Court of Georgia Order for Designee Voting** Page 15
 - C. **Trial Court Caseload Report** Page 16
- Judgeship Need Assessment Charts:**
- 1) Judgeship Case Weight Needed to Qualify Page 17
 - 2) Number of Judges & Details of the Circuit & Per Judge Weights Page 18
 - 3) Superior Court Circuit Time Line Page 20
 - 4) 2006 Circuits, Personnel, & Weighted Caseload Page 21
 - 5) 2006 Criminal Filings by Rank & 5-year Percentage Change Page 22
 - 6) 2006 Civil Filings by Rank & 5-year Percentage Change Page 23
 - 7) 2006 Population Page 24
- 4-Factor Chart Page 25
Sample Ballot (Qualifying) Page 26
Sample Ballot (Ranking) Page 27
- D. **Letters of Request and Comments from Invited Respondents**
 - 1) Alcovy Judicial Circuit (5th Judge) Tab 3
 - 2) Douglas Judicial Circuit (4th Judge) Tab 4
 - 3) Flint Judicial Circuit (4th Judge) Tab 5
 - 4) Mountain Judicial Circuit (3rd Judge) Tab 6
 - 5) Northeastern Judicial Circuit (5th Judge) Tab 7
 - 6) Piedmont Judicial Circuit (4th Judge) Tab 8
 - 7) Southern Judicial Circuit (6th Judge) Tab 9
 - 8) Tifton Judicial Circuit (3rd Judge) Tab 10

- E. **Carryover Circuit Requests and Comments**
 - 1) Alapaha Judicial Circuit (3rd Judge) Tab 11
 - 2) Atlanta Judicial Circuit (20th Judge) Tab 12
 - 3) Brunswick Judicial Circuit (5th Judge) Tab 13

- F. **Alteration of Circuit Boundaries**
 - 1) Alcovy Judicial Circuit (Circuit Split) Tab 14

- 4. **Vote on New Judgeship Requests by Written Ballot**
(Est. Time—5 Min.)

- 5. **Report from AOC Director** Tab 15
(Mr. Ratley, Est. Time—10 Min.)

- 6. **Rank Judgeship Recommendations** [Including all carryover requests]
(Est. Time—5 Min.)

- * * * * * **15 Minute Break** * * * * *

- 7. **Budget Matters** Tab 16
(Justice Hines, Judge Kreeger & Mr. Harris, Est. Time—15 Min.)
FY 2008 Amended Budget
FY 2009 General Appropriations & Enhancements

- 8. **Reports from Judicial Agencies**
 - a) Board of Court Reporting Tab 17
(For Informational Purposes Only)
No Action Required by the Council

 - b) Records Retention Committee
(Judge Whittemore/Dr. Arnold, Est. Time—5 Min.)

 - c) Workload Assessment Committee
(Judge Bishop or Dr. Arnold, Est. Time—15 Min.)

 - d) Georgia Courts Automation Commission Tab 18
(Judge Pape, Est. Time—10 Min.)

- 9. **Reports from Appellate Courts and Trial Court Councils**
 - a) Supreme Court
(Chief Justice Sears, Est. Time—5 Min.)

 - b) Court of Appeals
(Chief Judge Barnes, Est. Time—5 Min.)

- c) Council of Superior Court Judges
(Judge, McGarity, Est. Time—5 Min.)
- d) Council of State Court Judges
(Judge Cole, Est. Time—5 Min.)
- e) Council of Juvenile Court Judges
(Judge Tilley, Est. Time—5 Min.)
- f) Council of Probate Court Judges
(Judge Clarke, Est. Time—5 Min.)
- g) Council of Magistrate Court Judges
(Judge Warden, Est. Time—5 Min.)
- h) Council of Municipal Court Judges
(Judge Clifton, Est. Time—5 Min.)

- 10. **Old/New Business**
(Chief Justice Sears, Est. Time—15 Min.)

Resolution Honoring Skip Chesshire for his service as
President of the National Association for Court Management

Tab 19

Date and Place of Next Regular Council Meeting

Date: Tuesday, December 11, 2007

Place: Wyndham Vinings Hotel

- 11. **Concluding Remarks and Adjournment**
(Chief Justice Sears, Est. Time—5 Min.)

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GROUP PHOTOGRAPH WILL BE TAKEN OUTSIDE IN FRONT OF HOTEL

12 Noon — Lunch Served in the Georgia Ballroom (Salon 6-8)

Judicial Council of Georgia

Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place Hotel
1775 Pleasant Hill Road at Crestwood
Duluth, GA 30096

August 28, 2007

NEW MEMBERS WHO HAVE JOINED THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

1. Judge Anne Workman, Superior Court, Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit
2. Judge Connie J. Holt, Magistrate Court of Morgan County
3. Judge Bill Clifton, Municipal Court of Forsyth

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF GEORGIA

Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears
Chairperson
Supreme Court of Georgia
507 State Judicial Building
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-3474/FAX 657-6997

Presiding Justice Carol W. Hunstein
Vice Chairperson
Supreme Court of Georgia
501 State Judicial Building
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-3475/FAX 657-9586

Judge A. Quillian Baldwin, Jr.
Superior Courts
Coweta Judicial Circuit
100 Ridley Avenue
P. O. Box 1364
LaGrange, GA 30241
706-883-1633/FAX 298-3706

Chief Judge Anne Elizabeth Barnes
Court of Appeals of Georgia
47 Trinity Avenue, Suite 501
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-3454/FAX 463-8303

Judge David E. Barrett
Superior Courts
Enotah Judicial Circuit
114 Courthouse Street, Box 2
Blairsville, GA 30512
706-431-6100/F 431-6099

Judge Lillis J. Brown
Probate Court of Rockdale County
Rockdale County Courthouse
922 Court Street, Room 107
Conyers, GA 30012
770-929-4057/FAX 918-6502

Judge John C. Carbo, III
State Court of Clayton County
Harold R. Banke Justice Center
9151 Tara Boulevard, Room 3JC202
Jonesboro, GA 30236
770-477-4500/FAX 477-4595

Judge Walter J. Clarke, II
Probate Court of Gwinnett County
Gwinnett Justice &
Administration Center
75 Langley Drive
Lawrenceville, GA 30045-6900
770-822-8250/FAX 822-8267

Judge Brenda H. Cole
State Court of Fulton County
T3905 Justice Center Tower
185 Central Avenue, S. W.
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-730-4311/FAX 730-8182

Judge Doris L. Downs
Superior Court
Atlanta Judicial Circuit
T-7955 Justice Center Tower
185 Central Avenue, S. W.
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-730-4991/FAX 335-2828

Judge Stephen S. Goss
Superior Court
Dougherty Judicial Circuit
P. O. Box 1827
Albany, GA 31702-1827
229-434-2683/FAX 431-2174

Judge Connie J. Holt
Magistrate Court of Morgan County
P. O. Box 589
Madison, GA 30650
706-342-3088/FAX 343-6364

Judge Shepherd Lee Howell
Superior Courts
Cherokee Judicial Circuit
135 W. Cherokee Avenue, Suite 322
Cartersville, GA 30120
770-387-5124/FAX 606-2397

Judge Ronnie Joe Lane
Superior Courts
Pataula Judicial Circuit
P. O. Box 636
Donalsonville, GA 39845-0636
229-524-2149/FAX 524-8817

Judge Arch W. McGarity
Superior Court
Flint Judicial Circuit
Henry County Courthouse
One Courthouse Square
McDonough, GA 30253-3293
770-288-7907/FAX 288-7920

Judge M. Yvette Miller
Court of Appeals of Georgia
47 Trinity Avenue, Suite 501
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-463-3032/FAX 656-4717

Judge John M. Ott
Superior Courts
Alcovy Judicial Circuit
Walton County Government Building
303 South Hammond Drive, Suite 221
Monroe, GA 30655
770-266-1635/FAX 266-1630

Judge F. Gates Peed
Superior Courts
Ogeechee Judicial Circuit
P. O. Box 967
Statesboro, GA 30459
912-764-6095/FAX 489-3148

Judge J. Stanley Smith
Superior Courts
Dublin Judicial Circuit
P. O. Box 2069
Dublin, GA 31040-2069
478-272-4131\FAX 272-1639

Judge R. Rucker Smith
Superior Court
Southwestern Judicial Circuit
P. O. Box 784
Americus, GA 31709-0784
229-928-4555/FAX 928-4552

Judge Steve Teske
Juvenile Court of Clayton County
Clayton Judicial Circuit
Clayton County Courthouse, Annex 3
121 S. McDonough Street, 3rd Floor
Jonesboro, GA 30236
770-477-3260/FAX 473-5967

Judge Velma Tilley
Juvenile Court of Bartow County
Cherokee Judicial Circuit
135 W. Cherokee Avenue, Suite 333
Cartersville, GA 30120-3181
770-387-5039/FAX 387-5044

Judge Kimberly Warden
Magistrate Court of Fulton County
160 Pryor Street, S. W., Suite G-47
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-730-5396/FAX 893-6853

Judge Anne Workman
Superior Court
Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit
5230 DeKalb County Courthouse
556 N. McDonough Street
Decatur, GA 30030
404-371-2338

EX-OFFICIO MEMBER:

Judge Bill Clifton
President
Council of Municipal Court Judges
577 Mulberry Street, Suite 710
Macon, GA 31201
478-750-8600/FAX 750-8686

Meeting of the Judicial Council of Georgia
Jekyll Island Club
June 12, 2007

Members Present:

Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears
Presiding Justice Carol Hunstein
Judge Arch McGarity
Judge Quillian Baldwin
Judge David Barrett
Judge Thomas Bobbitt
Judge John Carbo
Judge Jim Clarke
Judge Brenda Cole
Judge Dee Downs
Judge Gail Flake
Judge Stephen Goss
Judge Shepherd Lee Howell
Judge Ronnie Joe Lane
Judge John Ott
Judge Gates Peed
Judge Stan Smith
Judge Rucker Smith
Judge Steve Teske
Judge Velma Tilley
Judge Kim Warden

Members Absent:

Chief Judge Anne E. Barnes
Judge Yvette Miller
Judge Lillis Brown

Ex Officio Member:

Judge Michael Cielinski

Staff Present:

Mr. David Ratley
Mr. Vince Harris
Mr. Jorge Basto
Ms. Cynthia Clanton

Mr. Byron Branch
Ms. Silvia Gaines
Mr. George Nolan
Mr. Mark Seymour
Mr. Bob Bray
Ms. Tiffany Pete
Dr. Greg Arnold
Ms. Terry Cobb
Mr. Chris Patterson
Mr. Kevin Tolmich
Ms. Debra Nesbit
Ms. Kelly Moody
Ms. Billie Bolton

Guests Present:

Mr. Douglas Ashworth, State Bar of Georgia
Ms. Tee Barnes, Clerk, Supreme Court of Georgia
Judge Joe Bishop, Pataula Judicial Circuit
Judge William Boyett, Conasauga Judicial Circuit
Judge Ed Carriere, State Court of DeKalb County
Ms. Connie Cheatham, Clerk of Superior Court, McDuffie County
Mr. John Cowart, Second District Court Administrator
Judge Linda Cowen, State Court of Clayton County
Ms. Judy Cramer, Fifth District Court Administrator
Ms. Cheryl F. Custer, Judicial Qualifications Commission
Judge David Darden, State Court of Cobb County
Mr. Danny DeLoach, First District Court Administrator
Mr. Steve Ferrell, Ninth District Court Administrator
Mr. Tripp Fitzner, Eighth District Court Administrator
Mr. Tom Gunnels, Tenth District Court Administrator
Mr. Steve Hagan, North Highland Group
Justice Harris Hines, Supreme Court of Georgia
Ms. Lorraine Hoffmann-Polk, Council of Superior Court Judges
Mr. Michael Holiman, Council of Superior Court Clerks
Mr. Greg Jones, Third District Court Administrator
Judge Russ McClelland, State Court of Forsyth County
Ms. Cathy McCumber, Fourth District Court Administrator
Mr. Nolan E. Martin, Public Defender Standards Council
Mr. William L. Martin, III, Clerk, Court of Appeals
Mr. Tom Merriam, Council of Superior Court Judges
Ms. Tia Milton, Staff Attorney, Supreme Court of Georgia
Mr. Shinji Morokuma, Office of Dispute Resolution
Ms. Jody Overcash, Seventh District Court Administrator

Judge Tim Pape, Juvenile Court of Floyd County
Mr. Jim Poulakos, North Highland Group
Mr. Rich Reaves, Institute of Continuing Judicial Education
Ms. Sharon Reiss, Council of Magistrate Court Judges
Mr. Fred Roney, Sixth District Court Administrator
Ms. Sheila Studdard, Clerk of Superior Court, Fayette County
Judge Mel Westmoreland, Atlanta Judicial Circuit
Judge Anne Workman, Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit

Call to Order

Chief Justice Sears convened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. She welcomed members and guests to the meeting. She acknowledged new Council members: Judge Steve Goss, Judge John Carbo, Judge Steve Teske and Judge Michael Cielenski. She also noted that Judge Downs has recently been re-elected as Chief Judge of the Atlanta Judicial Circuit. Chief Justice Sears asked that the council members introduce themselves, followed by those seated in the audience.

Approval of Minutes

The Chair called attention to the minutes of the Judicial Council meeting held on December 5, 2006. She asked for corrections or additions. Presiding Justice Hunstein moved approval of the minutes. Judge Baldwin seconded. The motion carried.

Status of 2007 Judgeship Requests

Mr. Ratley reported that to date eight circuits have sent letters requesting a new judgeship. Dr. Arnold noted that June 22, 2007, is the deadline for any circuit wishing to have a request considered at the August meeting of the Council.

Reports from Committees

Nominating Committee. Judge Ott reported on nominations for vacancies on the Board of Court Reporting as follows: Reappointment of Judge Linda Cowen (state court

representative); Mr. William Abel, Ms. Kerry McFadden and Ms. Marilyn Roe (court reporter representatives; and new appointee, Mr. John Larkins, Jr. (State Bar representative). Judge Ott moved that these nominations be adopted. Judge Goss seconded. The motion carried.

Policy Committee. Ms. Nesbit briefly reviewed the handout of legislative actions from the 2007 session including: discontinuation of the Superior Court Sentence Review Panel as of January 1, 2009; authorization of five new superior court judgeships; transfer of the Public Defender Standards Council to the Executive Branch effective July 1, 2007; a \$1.1 million increase for Drug Court programs. She noted that the governor's vetoes were detailed in the legislative handout.

Ms. Nesbit stated that the policy committee will meet in August to consider pending legislation, including the private probation measure.

Workload Assessment Committee. Judge Bishop reviewed the agenda materials regarding newly-calculated average time to disposition figures for each type of case heard in superior court. He noted that AOC research compiled these figures based on actual time-keeping data reported by superior court judges. Finer distinctions have been delineated within the broad categories of criminal, general civil, and domestic relations work than in the past. The workload assessment committee proposes that the new average time to disposition figures be used for purposes of the 2007 judgeship study.

Judge Lane moved adoption of the average times by case type as presented. Justice Hunstein seconded. The motion carried.

Judge Bishop turned to calculations of the judge year values for the 2007 judgeship study. The committee has also recommended more accurate distinctions among

the various circuits by calculating values for five broad groupings, rather than three. These are as follows: Large Urban, Other Urban, Suburban, Rural and Other Rural.

Judge Barrett asked about the variations in Total Judge Time among the five categories. Dr. Arnold stated that variations among the categories reflect differences in actual travel times as recorded by judges; for example in single county circuits travel is not an applicable time factor. He noted that other factors such as the assistance provided by law clerks and other court staff also may contribute to variations in total judge time.

Discussion ensued regarding concerns over hours described as nonwork. Dr. Arnold noted that the work year values were based on a robust sample of judicial timekeeping: 52 judges participated out of a total of 200 superior court judges in the state. Activities included as “nonwork” simply reflect hours when the judge is not available for case-related work because he or she is either engaged in other duties, or on leave, etc. Judge Bishop and Dr. Arnold assured council members that case-related hours worked on weekends and evenings are measured; these hours are reflected in the actual average case times already approved by the Council.

Judge Peed asked how the judge year values impact the likelihood of a particular circuit qualifying for a new judgeship. Dr. Arnold referred to charts on pages 7-12 where the new disposition times had been used as a test of the system to generate hypothetical results. Judge Bishop noted that adoption of the new values and circuit groupings is needed for use in determining thresholds for 2007 judgeship study.

Judge Lane moved adoption of the five judge-year values. Judge McGarity seconded. After some members expressed their desire for further discussion of the new calculations, Judge Howell asked that the matter be tabled. Judge Lane amended his

motion for approval, to a motion to table. Judge McGarity accepted the amendment. The motion to table carried.

Dr. Arnold stated that, until further discussions can take place, staff will use existing weights, based on the old case-type definitions, for the August judgeship study. Chief Justice Sears asked that the workload assessment committee schedule an open meeting so that the superior court judges have adequate time to resolve concerns regarding the 2007 judge year values.

Drug Court Committee. Ms. Nesbit reported on the committee's recent drug court conference held May 30 – June 1. The Legislature has appropriated \$2.1 million for FY08 to fund existing drug courts and create new ones. Judge John Girardeau of Gainesville is chairing a subcommittee to allocate these funds. Last year 46 separate drug courts received funding from the committee. Of these eight courts were in the implementation phase and 38 were fully operative. She noted that all drug court monies are disbursed on a reimbursement basis.

Records Retention Committee. Dr. Arnold stated that Judge Whittemore had planned to attend the meeting, but due to the death of a colleague, was unable to do so. Dr. Arnold stated that both the probate court judges and the magistrate court judges are in the final stages of drafting their evidence retention rules for submission to the Supreme Court. Superior and state court retention rules are being considered. The committee has been asked by court administrators, superior court clerks and others to review the existing common courts records retention schedules to determine changes that may be appropriate. A committee meeting will be scheduled in the near future to begin this review.

Domestic Violence Committee. Written report.

Budget Matters

Judge Carriere referred members of the Council to the Consolidated State Budget handout. He noted that the Public Defenders Standards Council was no longer part of the Judicial Branch budget. This is reflected in the five percent decrease to the '08 total appropriation. Budget reductions also impacted the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education and the Office of Dispute Resolution.

Judge Carriere stated that the Judicial Council will conform to the Governor's request that future enhancement item requests be accompanied by a written impact statement to justify the proposed increase. The Chief Justice will review the requests before they are sent to the Judicial Council Budget Committee for action. Full details of the FY08 budget will be presented at the upcoming budget committee meeting.

Judge Carriere announced he is passing chairmanship of the budget committee to Justice Harris Hines; Judge George Kreeger will become Vice Chair. Committee members are: Judge Betty Cason; Judge Brenda Cole; Judge Arch McGarity; Judge Yvette Miller; Judge Velma Tilley and Judge Kim Warden. A two-day budget committee meeting open to all Judicial Council members will take place in July.

Chief Justice Sears expressed appreciation to Judge Carriere for the outstanding job he has done as chair of the budget committee.

Report of AOC Director

Mr. Ratley introduced Ms. Kelly Moody who is moving from the Governmental Affairs Division to become Executive Program Manager within the Director's Office.

Ms. Terry Cobb will continue to coordinate Judicial Council meetings and serve as meeting and conference planner for the agency.

Mr. Ratley commended members of the AOC staff for continuing to provide strong leadership for agency programs and projects and expressed his pride in recent successes: the DUI/Drug Court Conference, the full funding obtained for agency benefit costs from the General Assembly, funding of four new positions to staff the County & Municipal Probation Advisory Council, continuation funding for the Domestic Violence Grant program, strategic planning services and the expansion of the Research staff.

Mr. Ratley introduced Ms. Silvia Gaines, the new program manager for the Committee on Access and Fairness in the Courts. Ms. Gaines was previously employed by the Dept. of Juvenile Justice. She has been in her new position since October.

Mr. Vince Harris reported on the accomplishments of the IT section including: rebuilding of the TIPS and magistrate and probate information systems as web-based applications, launching new web sites for JQC and others, invitations for Mr. Jorge Basto and Mr. Rex McElrath to present AOC innovations at the upcoming national Conference on Court Technology.

Mr. Harris commended the work of Mr. McElrath who leads the development team on e-filing initiatives with the Washington and Bibb County Offices of Child Support Services. The project has now progressed to the capability testing phase: the first actual cases are being initiated electronically, rather than on paper, records are then transmitted to sheriff's offices and courts electronically, even signatures are handled on-line. Mr. Harris stated that when fully operational, the innovative system will cut case-processing time and costs dramatically.

Mr. Basto briefly explained the Information Technology section's initiatives in business intelligence reporting for government and contingency planning for Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity as it relates to the agency's data files and all software applications.

Reports from Appellate Courts and Councils

Supreme Court. Chief Justice Sears reported on three matters: a new Supreme Court Commission is working on a disaster preparedness plan to keep the courts in operation in the event of a possible pandemic; Georgia is one of seven states chosen to participate in a national grant for establishing mental health courts; and Ms. Jane Hansen, formerly with the AJC, has been hired as the new public information officer for the Supreme Court. Justice Hines added that he is happy to work with judges in his new role as Budget committee chair.

Council of Superior Court Judges. Judge McGarity expressed appreciation to Judge Boyett for his leadership as president of the council. He noted that the council's legislative success was mixed: an upgraded pay package for superior court judges' secretaries succeeded in putting them on par with confidential secretaries in the executive branch; however, a pay increase for superior court judges stalled in the Senate and will be reconsidered next year. Judge McGarity noted that superior court sentences handed down after July 1, 2007, will not be eligible for review by the Sentence Review Panel.

Judge Lawton Stephens and Judge George Peagler are representing the superior courts on a joint House/Senate Study Committee on Indigent Defense. In addition the governor is expected to form a study committee on mental health courts; Judge Steve Goss has been designated by the executive committee to serve.

Council of State Court Judges. Judge Cole reported as the new president of the council. Other officers are: Judge Carbo, president-elect; Judge Edgar, secretary and Judge Ginsberg, treasurer. The state court judges continue their emphasis on building stronger relationships with other courts, judges and the public. Continuation and expansion of DUI courts is a priority as is preparation for the national Mock Trial Competition to be held in Atlanta in 2009.

Council of Juvenile Court Judges. Judge Tilley reported that Judge Teske is the new president-elect of the council. She noted that the council recently increased membership of their executive committee to include judges from each of the ten judicial districts. The council plans to sponsor a series of regional meetings to gather input from juvenile court judges around the state. Their membership is concerned about the consequences of allowing Administrative Legitimation of a child based solely on the mother's statement. Juvenile court judges believe this is not in the best interests of the parties or children and may seek legislation to discontinue the practice.

Council of Probate Court Judges. Judge Clarke reported the following initiatives: completion of the criminal and non-criminal evidence retention rules; launch of a probate court workload assessment study; updated versions of the Handbook for Personal Representatives of Estates and the guardianship video. Judge Clarke would like the council to work to upgrade qualifications of individuals seeking the office of probate court judge.

Council of Magistrate Court Judges. Judge Bobbitt reported that the magistrates are working with the Commission on Domestic Violence to draft good behavior legislation and a domestic violence benchbook; an on-line records and reporting process

for their mentoring program is in place; a practical guide on civil justice for magistrate court clerks is underway. He noted the loss of funding for ICJE will impact training opportunities for magistrate court judges. In conclusion Judge Bobbitt expressed his support for making the municipal court judges voting members of the Judicial Council.

Council of Municipal Court Judges. Judge Cilenski reported on the following items: proposed changes to their uniform rules will be voted on by the membership this summer; their strategic planning process has been completed; and increasing the number of municipal courts reporting caseload data to the AOC is a priority. Judge Cilenski expressed appreciation to George Nolan of GCAC for his assistance with the technology plan for the council. The council is exploring methods to standardize the qualifications for the office of municipal court judge and standardize court procedures.

Reports from Judicial Agencies

Written reports provided for the Committee on Justice for Children, the Georgia Courts Automation Commission and the Committee on Access and Fairness.

Transition into Law Practice. Mr. Ashworth reported that the State Bar program to upgrade professionalism of lawyers entering practice has produced excellent results after only one year of operation. Specialized tracks for those interested in entering government service as prosecutors or public defenders are currently in development. To date mentoring assignments have been made for 1012 beginning lawyers.

Mr. Ashworth noted that a total of 1000 new lawyers pass the Georgia bar exam each year; in addition young lawyers come here from all over the country. For lawyers entering practice, 80% join some type of firm; of the beginning attorneys who chose to be sole practitioners, one-third do not last three months. Group mentoring assignments are

made available to those law school graduates (13%) who have no idea how they plan to use their law degrees. Georgia is leading the nation in this arena.

Old/New Business

Chief Justice Sears announced that the next meeting of the Judicial Council will take place on Tuesday, August 28, 2007 in Atlanta. She presented Certificates of Appreciation to Judge Bobbitt and Judge Flake for their service on the Council.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Billie Bolton". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Billie Bolton, Assistant Director

The above and foregoing minutes were approved at the meeting held on _____ day of _____, 200_.

Analysis of Calendar Year 2006

Caseload Data

**Prepared for the Judicial Council of Georgia to
Support the Need for Additional Judgeships and
Alteration of Circuit Boundaries**



Provided by:

The Administrative Office of the Courts

Research

August 28, 2007

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Letters of Request and Comments from Invited Respondents

New Request: First Year Consideration

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Carryover Request

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Alteration of Circuit Boundaries

Alcovy	Tab -	14
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Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts

David L. Ratley
Director

M E M O R A N D U M

To: All Judicial Council Members

From: Research Staff

Date: August 8, 2007

Re: Explanation of Judgeship Need Assessment Documents

On August 28, 2007 the Judicial Council of Georgia will meet. Again this year, at the request of Chief Judge Joe C. Bishop, Chair of the Judicial Workload Assessment Committee, the Office of Research (AOCOR) is providing each of you with a copy of the Judicial Workload Assessment Guide (JWAG). This Guide was developed as a comprehensive handbook to provide detailed information concerning the judgeship process. The Guide is an essential tool, particularly for first time members of the Judicial Council, to understanding these processes and includes detailed information about policy, caseload analysis, and information concerning circuit qualification. The bound copy is located in the pocket of the agenda notebook binder.

Processes:

The data presented in the Agenda on the Judgeship *Super Table* for calendar year 2006 was collected in a number of different ways. The general civil and the domestic relations data was downloaded from the Georgia Superior Court Clerks Cooperative Authority in early May of 2007. The data was sent, very shortly thereafter, to the Superior Court Clerks of each county and was verified by the clerks. Then, adjustments were submitted in writing to the AOCOR. Subsequently, the adjusted general civil and domestic relations data was forwarded to each of the District Court Administrators (DCAs). The DCAs, in turn, conducted a final verification of the case load data and reported changes to the AOCOR. Any adjustments to the data submitted by the DCAs during their final verification were updated and finalized prior to presentation to the Judicial Council.

The criminal data was collected from a variety of sources. The number of Unified Appeal filings was reported to the AOCOR by the District Attorney of each circuit. The felony and misdemeanor filings were reported by the Superior Court Clerks to Research in summary form by defendant index, docket index, or the criminal calendar. In addition, the Research staff counted the filings and defendants from bound dockets or from computer screens in the Clerks' offices. The Chief Probation Officers reported the number of probation revocation petitions filed in the Superior Courts. In many instances, private

probation providers reported the number of misdemeanor revocation petitions filed in the Superior Courts still handling misdemeanors.

Specific Processes for Completion of the Judgeship Chart

All caseload data was entered into a secure computer program. The data on the Judgeship *Super Table* is computer generated. All data was updated independently by Research staff from final verification from the Clerk of Court, the DCAs, or both. All corrections to the data must be in writing and are held for two years in a secure area in the AOCOR.

Letters of support are sent, primarily, to the Chairperson of the Judicial Council and are forwarded to the Director of the AOC. Copies are submitted to Research staff for compiling reports and introductory comments. Each part of the agenda is described by title and page numbers.

EXPLANATION OF DOCUMENTS WITH PAGE NUMBERS

- A. Judicial Council Policy for Judgeship & Circuit Boundary Studies:**
Page 8, Description - *Official policy of the Judicial Council governing the methodology applied in judgeship assessment process. These policies have been in place since 1973 and are revised by the Judicial Council when circumstances require.*
- B. Supreme Court of Georgia Order for Designee Voting:**
Page 15, Description – *Dated April 10, 2003, this order distinguishes the circumstances under which a judge, acting as a designee for a Judicial Council member, may not vote or may vote.*
- C. Trial Court Caseload Report:**
Page 16, Description: *Oral presentation of caseload data reports for all trial courts including State, Juvenile, Magistrate, and Probate Court.*

JUDGESHIP NEED ASSESSMENT CHARTS

- A. Judgeship Case Weight Needed to Qualify:**
Page 17, Description - *The current case weights were approved by the Council on June 8, 2005. Each circuit must have a weight equal to or greater than that presented on this table for the number of judges currently authorized. For example: a circuit with 5 judges would need to have a weight of at least 6.60 to qualify for a recommendation for the 6th judgeship.*
- B. Number of Judges and Details of the Circuit and Per Judge Weights:**
Page 18, Description - *This table displays the weight needed to qualify for a recommendation for an additional judge by circuit and per judge. Each value is paired with the actual weight generated from the calendar year 2006 data.*

- C. Superior Court Circuit Timeline:**
Page 20, Description - *Displays the detailed history of newly created judgeships and new circuits by year. This timeline assists Council members by displaying the information concerning the number of active judge vs. authorized positions.*
- D. Chart 1: 2006 Circuits, Personnel, & Weighted Caseload:**
Page 21, Description – *This table shows the current number of judgeships for all classes of courts in the circuit. In the last column, the chart includes the circuit judge year value, also called the “**weighted caseload**,” computed from caseload data collected by or reported to the AOC from calendar year 2006. Circuits requesting judgeship studies for presentation to the General Assembly in 2007 are highlighted in yellow. In order to “**qualify**” for a recommendation, one of two conditions must be met. The first condition requires a circuit to have a weight that is equal to or greater than the “**value to qualify**” currently approved by the Judicial Council. For example, if a circuit has three (3) judges it must have a “**value to qualify**” equal to or greater than 4.02. When this first condition is met the circuit is said to “**qualify**” and is eligible for recommendation to the General Assembly upon a simple majority of the votes cast by the Judicial Council. Second, if a circuit does not have a sufficiently large enough “**value to qualify**,” using the same definition presented in the first condition, it must receive a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes cast by the Judicial Council to be recommended to the General Assembly.*
- E. Chart 2: CY 2006 Criminal Filings by Rank & 5-year Percentage Change:**
Page 22, Description - *Caseload figures in this table are ranked from high to low and permit the reader to determine the position of the requesting circuit for that value. Each case type defined by the Judicial Council is displayed. The increase or decrease in the number of cases for each case type is shown, as a percentage, compared with the data from calendar year 2002.*
- F. Chart 3: CY 2006 Circuit & Civil Filings by Rank & 5-year Percentage Change:**
Page 23, Description - *Caseload figures in this are ranked from high to low and permit the reader to determine the relative position of the requesting circuit for that value. Each case type, as defined by the Judicial Council, is displayed. The increase or decrease in the number of cases for each case type is shown, as a percentage, based on a comparison with the data from calendar year 2002.*
- G. Chart 4: CY 2006 Population Estimate:**
Page 24, Description - *This data reflects the 2006 population estimate released on July 1, 2007 by the U.S. Census and the 2010 projections published by the Office of Planning and Budget.*

4 FACTOR CHART (2007 presentation of 2006 data)

Page 25, Description: *This chart is **not an official part** of the studies conducted by the Judicial Council associated with Requests for Additional Superior Court Judgeships. It was developed to highlight the objective criteria used during the formal Judicial Council Deliberations, see paragraphs 2 and 3 on Page 2 of the Judicial Council Policy presented earlier in this memorandum. The purpose of the chart is to aid Judicial Council members in their personal deliberations regarding how they will vote. Since, the case count methodology was revised, the factors with ranking and the sum of the ranks, have been limited to the numerical values for criminal, general civil, and domestic relations cases along with the estimated and projected population. As in the past, the general meaning of the Weighted Caseload in Minutes per Judge will be explained during the staff presentation to the Judicial Council.*

Sample Ballot (Qualifying)

Page 26

Sample Ballot (Ranking)

Page 27

LETTERS OF REQUEST AND COMMENTS FROM INVITED RESPONDENTS

New Judgeship Requests

Description: *These letters are from circuits requesting new judgeship recommendations sent to the Judicial Council during calendar year 2007. Letters received by the AOC, up to the date of the actual meeting, will be provided to the Judicial Council at the time of the meeting.*

Alcovy	5 th	Tab - 3
Douglas	4 th	Tab - 4
Flint	4 th	Tab - 5
Mountain	3 rd	Tab - 6
Northeastern	5 th	Tab - 7
Piedmont	4 th	Tab - 8
Southern	6 th	Tab - 9
Tifton	3 rd	Tab - 10

Carryover Judgeship Request

Description: *Judicial Council policy allows a circuit that has been recommended for an additional judgeship to the General Assembly to be presented for three (3) years. This means that the circuit does not have to re-qualify for a recommendation unless the caseload decreases by more than 10%.*

Alapaha	3 rd	Approved August 2005	Tab - 11
Atlanta	20 th	Approved August 2006	Tab - 12
Brunswick	5 th	Approved August 2006	Tab - 13

Alteration of Circuit Boundaries

Description: *Judicial Council policy allows a circuit that has been recommended for an Alteration of Circuit Boundaries to be presented to the General Assembly for three (3) years.*

Alcovy

Approved August 2005

Tab - 14

Judicial Council Policy for Judgeship and Circuit Boundary Studies*

Initiation

Recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly for judicial personnel allocations for the superior courts shall be made annually prior to the beginning of the regular session of the General Assembly. Studies by the Administrative Office of the Courts of the need for judgeships or of the need for changes in circuit boundaries may be authorized by the Judicial Council upon the request of the governor, members of the General Assembly, or by a judge of the county or counties affected. Such requests shall be submitted in writing by June 1, prior to the session of the General Assembly during which the judgeship or change in circuit boundaries is sought. Any request received after June 1 shall not be considered until the following year. Any judge who intends to make a request for a study must notify the Judicial Council of any special circumstances or data of the courts involved in the request by June 1 so that these special circumstances may be investigated during the studies conducted by the Administrative Office of the Courts. (Rev. 12/07/2005)

Purpose

The Judicial Council seeks to achieve a balanced and equitable distribution of case load among the judges of the state to promote speedy and just dispositions of citizens' cases. The Judicial Council recognizes that the addition of a judgeship is a matter of great gravity and substantial expense to the counties and the state and should be approached through careful inquiry and deliberate study before action is taken. (10/27/1981)

Policy Statements

The Judicial Council will recommend the creation of additional judgeships or changes in circuit boundaries based only upon needs demonstrated through comparative "objective" studies. The Judicial Council will not recommend the addition of a judgeship not requested by the circuit under study unless there is clear and convincing evidence that an additional judgeship is needed. (10/27/1981)

As a matter of policy, the Judicial Council recommends that no new part-time judgeship be created. Because of the advantages of multi-judge circuits, the Judicial Council generally will not recommend the creation of additional circuits. (10/27/1981)

* Reprinted and reformatted from the original published in Georgia Courts Journal.

Judgeships

1. Part-time judgeships

As a general rule, part-time judgeships are not an effective method of handling judicial workload. The disadvantages of part-time judgeships are many; a few specific ones are:

a. The cost of training a part-time judge is the same as that of training a full-time judge, but the benefits to the state or local government of training a part-time judge are only a fraction of those realized by training a full-time judge, since a part-time judge will hear only a fraction of the cases heard by a full-time judge receiving the same training. Additionally, part-time judges are generally not paid for the time they spend in continuing education. This creates a financial disincentive for part-time judges to attend continuing education, whom might ordinarily spend time practicing law or conducting law or conducting other business. (10/27/1981)

b. Conflicts of interest often arise in professional relationships for part-time judges. It is often difficult for other attorneys to litigate against an attorney and have to appear before the same attorney, sitting as judge, the next day. Additionally, cases in which part-time judges are disqualified usually arise in their own court, thus eliminating a large potential portion of their law practice. (10/27/1981)

2. Promotion of Multi-Judge Circuits

Multi-judge courts are more effective organizations for administrative purposes. Some specific advantages of multi-judge courts are:

a. Accommodation of judicial absences. Multi-judge circuits allow better management in the absence of a judge from the circuit due to illness, disqualification, vacation, and the demands of other responsibilities such as continuing legal education. (10/27/1981)

b. More efficient use of jurors. Better use of jury manpower can be effected when two judges hold court simultaneously in the same county. One judge in a multi-judge circuit may use the other judge's excess jurors for a trial of a second case rather than excusing them at an added expense to the county. Present courtroom space in most counties may not permit two trials simultaneously; but such a practice, if implemented, may justify the building of a second smaller courtroom by the county affected, or the making of other arrangements. (10/27/1981)

c. Accommodation of problems of impartiality or disqualification. A larger circuit with additional judges may permit hometown cases where acquaintances are involved to be considered by an out-of-town judge without the appearance that the local judge is avoiding responsibility. (10/27/1981)

d. Improves court administration. Multi-judge circuits tend to promote impartiality and uniformity of administrative practices and procedures by making court administration something more than the extension of a single judge's personality. Multi-judge circuits also permit economies in the deployment of auxiliary court personnel. (10/27/1981)

e. Expedites handling of cases. Probably most important of all, under the arithmetic of calendar management, the judges of a multi-judge court can handle substantially more cases than an equal number of judges operating in separate courts. Besides the advantage of improved efficiency to be realized through the use of multi-judge circuits, there are also a number of other reasons as to why this approach should be taken. Under the existing law, a new judgeship may be created without the addition of another elected district attorney, although an assistant district attorney is added. However, when the circuit is divided and a new circuit thereby created, another elected district attorney is needed. A second reason supporting the use of multi-judge circuits is that upon division of an existing circuit into two new ones, one new circuit may grow disproportionately to the other, or population or other factors suggesting division may diminish, thus negating the factors which initially led to the division and compounding future problems of adjustment. (10/27/1981)

Methodology

1. Criteria for Superior Court Judgeship Requests

In establishing the need for additional superior court judgeships, the Judicial Council will consider weighted caseloads per judge for each circuit. If the per judge weighted caseload meets the threshold standards established by the Council for consideration of an additional judgeship, additional criteria will be considered. The threshold standard is a value set by the Judicial Council in open session. (06/08/2005)

Additional criteria considered may include, but are not limited to, the following and are not necessarily in the order of importance as listed below:

- a. Filings per judge
 - b. Growth rate of filings per judge
 - c. Open cases per judge
 - d. Case backlog per judge
 - e. Population served per judge
 - f. Population growth
 - g. Number and types of supporting courts
 - h. Availability and use of senior judge assistance
 - i. Number of resident attorneys per judge
 - j. Responses to letters to legislators, county commissioners, presidents of local bar associations, district attorneys, and clerks of superior court asking for their input.
- (8/25/2000)

2. Criteria for Studying Requests to Alter Circuit Boundaries

The criteria used by the Judicial Council in reviewing proposals to alter circuit boundaries will include the following criteria:

a. Weighted Caseload per Judge - After the proposed change in circuit boundaries, caseload should be more evenly distributed. In addition, a proposed circuit's workload should not vary significantly from the statewide average weighted caseload per judge. (10/27/1981)

b. Caseload Growth Trends - Caseload growth trends should be examined so that an imbalance in growth rates when a circuit boundary is changed will not necessitate a reallocation of manpower or alteration of circuit boundaries again in the near future. Such continual shifts in circuit boundaries or manpower could be very unsettling and, thereby, significantly reduce judicial efficiency. If a reliable caseload projection method is available, this technique will be used to determine future case filings; if one is not available, caseload growth rates, increases in the number of attorneys per capita and population projections will be analyzed. The population per judge should be evenly divided among the geographical areas affected by the proposed circuit boundary change if a recommendation is to be made. Secondly, population projections should be examined to insure that disparate population growth rates will not create a great imbalance in the population to be served by each judge within a short period of time from the date of the alteration of the circuit boundaries. Lastly, the population per judge of the altered circuit should not be substantially different from the statewide average population per judge. (10/27/1981)

c. Changes in Judicial Travel Time - Travel time diminish total judicial time available for case processing; therefore, travel time should not be significantly increased for judges in circuits affected by a change in circuit boundaries before such a change should be recommended. Terms of court in and the number of times each county was visited on case-related business by the judges should be determined and these trips should be translated into travel time by using official distances between courthouses and road conditions determined by the Georgia Department of Public Safety. (10/27/1981)

d. Projected Changes in Cost to State and Local Government - Cost savings or additional expenditures required of local and state governing authorities should be determined. Changes in cost for personnel, facilities, and travel should be considered. A recommendation for change should not be made unless additional expenditures required are minimal or balanced by equivalent cost savings. (10/27/1981)

e. Characteristics of populace in areas of circuits sought to be separated, such as rural or urban. (12/11/1981)

f. Operational policies of circuit as presently constituted as might involve inattention to smaller counties in circuit. (12/11/1981)

g. Whether creation of new circuit would obviate necessity of one or two additional judges in parent circuit. (12/11/1981)

- h. Travel and other expenses incident to serving smaller counties. (12/11/1981)
- i. Alleviation of case assignment problems in larger counties of circuit. (12/11/1981)
- j. Population growth of counties of circuit which would reflect need for new circuit. (12/11/1981)
- k. Comparison population per judge in new circuit with standards approved by Judicial Council in recent years. (12/11/1981)
 - 1. The Judicial Council will presume that a multi-judge circuit is preferred over a single-judge circuit. (12/11/1981)
- m. If a county is to be split off from the circuit of which it is a part, the possibilities of adding that county to another circuit should be exhausted prior to the council's recommending a single- judge circuit. (12/11/1981)

Judicial Council Deliberations

1. Testimony

Judges, legislators, and others deemed appropriate by the chair shall be invited to make written remarks or present data regarding the need for judgeships or to alter circuit boundaries. Any special circumstance or data of a circuit for which a request is to be made must be brought to the attention of the Judicial Council by a judge of the requesting circuit by June 1 of the year prior to the year of the legislative session during which the judgeship or change in circuit boundaries will be considered. The written testimony of the judges, legislators and other persons shall be reviewed and considered by the Judicial Council in their deliberations regarding judicial manpower. Oral arguments will not be made. (6/6/1984)

2. Final Deliberations

After all written presentations, the Judicial Council and key Administrative Office of the Courts staff, in open session, will discuss the merits of each request. (6/6/1984)

3. Staff Presentations

The Administrative Office of the Courts will present data evaluating the need to add judgeships or to alter circuit boundaries based on council approved criteria and will make staff recommendations. (10/27/1981)

4. Vote

After final deliberations, the Council will, in open session, approve or disapprove recommended changes in judicial manpower allocations. Votes on such motions shall be by secret written ballot. A two-thirds vote of the council membership present at the session will be required to override an unfavorable recommendation based on the criteria contained in these by-laws (policy). After determining those circuits in which the council recommends an additional judgeship, the council will rank the recommendations based on need. Any ranking ballot that does not rank each and every judgeship recommendation presented on the secret ballot shall not be counted. (12/07/2005)

5. Length of Recommendations

Upon a recommendation of an additional judgeship or to alter circuit boundaries for a judicial circuit by the council, the recommendation shall remain approved by the council for a period of three years, unless the caseload of that circuit changes by plus or minus ten percent. (Rev. 12/13/1996)

6. Disqualifications

Any council member in a circuit or county affected by a council recommendation shall be eligible to vote by secret ballot on motions affecting that circuit, but shall not be present or participate in the council's final deliberations regarding his or her circuit. (Rev. 6/6/1984)

Dissemination of Recommendations

1. Study of the Need for Additional Superior Court Judgeships

The Administrative Office of the Courts shall prepare a report, including data required by the council for their deliberations and council policy statement, on the Judicial Council's recommendations as to the need for additional superior court judgeships. Such report shall be distributed to the governor, members of the judiciary and special judiciary committees of the Senate and House, all superior court judges and other interested parties approved by the director of the Administrative Office of the Courts. Additionally, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall prepare and distribute a press release summarizing the council's recommendations. (10/27/1981)

2. Special Studies of Judicial Manpower. Including Alteration of Circuit Boundaries

a. The Administrative Office of the Courts shall prepare reports on the Judicial Council's recommendations for special studies, including reports on requests to alter circuit boundaries and for judgeships of courts other than the superior court and shall distribute them to the requestor, and, in the discretion of the director, to other interested parties. (10/27/1981)

b. In preparing special reports, written remarks of judges, legislators, and others deemed appropriate by the chairperson shall be solicited by the Administrative Office of the Courts and considered by the Judicial Council. (12/11/1986)

Printed April 30, 2006



SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA

Atlanta April 10, 2003

The Honorable Supreme Court met pursuant to adjournment.

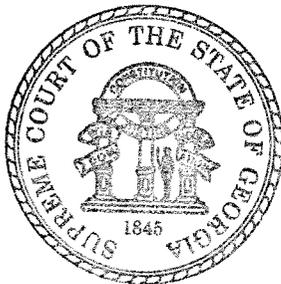
The following order was passed:

It is ordered that this Court's order of August 5, 1983, establishing rules for the Judicial Council of Georgia, be hereby amended to provide for an absent member's designee to vote in certain circumstances, to read as follows:

All members shall be entitled to vote, except as hereinafter specified. A member unable to attend a meeting shall be entitled to be represented by a judge, designated by the absent member, who may be heard but shall not be entitled to vote. In the event that the member is unable to attend a meeting due to illness, incapacitation, or the death of an immediate family member, the designee shall be entitled to vote.

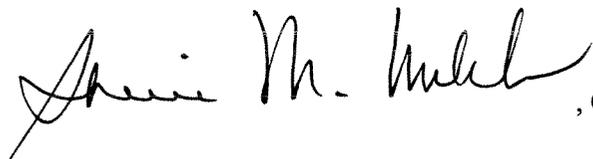
SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA

Clerk's Office, Atlanta



I hereby certify that the above is a true extract from
The minutes of the Supreme Court of Georgia

Witness my signature and the seal of said court hereto
Affixed the day and year last above written.

 , Clerk

Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts

David L. Ratley
Director

Reply to:
Office of Research

MEMORANDUM

TO: Judicial Council Members
FROM: Research Staff
DATE: August 8, 2007
RE: Status of Caseload Reports as of August 8, 2007

1. State: 71 out of 71 State courts have reported
2. Juvenile: 153 out of 159 Juvenile courts have reported
3. Probate: 153 out of 159 Probate courts have reported
4. Magistrate: 157 out of 159 Magistrate courts have reported

Judgeship Table
Judgeship Case Weight Needed to Qualify

Number of Judges	Value to Qualify
2	2.700
3	4.020
4	5.320
5	6.600
6	7.860
7	9.100
8	10.320
9	11.520
10	12.700
11	13.860
12	15.000
13	16.120
14	17.220
15	18.300
16	19.360
17	20.400
18	21.420
19	22.420
20	23.400
21	24.360
22	25.300
23	26.220
24	27.120
25	28.000

**Number of Judges and
Details of the Circuit and Per Judge Weights**

Circuit	Number of Judges	Circuit		Per Judge	
		Weight		Weight	
		To Qualify	Actual 2006	To Qualify	Actual 2006
Alapaha	2	2.70	3.31	1.35	1.65
Alcovy	4	5.32	6.41	1.33	1.60
Appalachian	3	4.02	3.88	1.34	1.29
Atlanta	19	22.42	21.72	1.18	1.14
Atlantic	4	5.32	4.24	1.33	1.06
Augusta	8	10.32	7.66	1.29	0.96
Bell-Forsyth	2	2.70	2.48	1.35	1.24
Blue Ridge	2	2.70	3.02	1.35	1.51
Brunswick	4	5.32	6.55	1.33	1.64
Chattahoochee	6	7.86	6.61	1.31	1.10
Cherokee	4	5.32	5.81	1.33	1.45
Clayton	4	5.32	4.77	1.33	1.19
Cobb	9	11.52	12.39	1.28	1.38
Conasauga	4	5.32	4.65	1.33	1.16
Cordele	2	2.70	2.84	1.35	1.42
Coweta	5	6.60	7.61	1.32	1.52
Dougherty	3	4.02	3.36	1.34	1.12
Douglas	3	4.02	4.26	1.34	1.42
Dublin	2	2.70	4.02	1.35	2.01
Eastern	6	7.86	4.91	1.31	0.82
Enotah	2	2.70	3.12	1.35	1.56
Flint	3	4.02	4.52	1.34	1.51
Griffin	4	5.32	4.64	1.33	1.16
Gwinnett	9	11.52	8.10	1.28	0.90
Houston	2	2.70	3.72	1.35	1.86
Lookout Mountain	4	5.32	5.21	1.33	1.30
Macon	5	6.60	6.23	1.32	1.25
Middle	2	2.70	2.69	1.35	1.35
Mountain	2	2.70	3.19	1.35	1.60
Northeastern	4	5.32	6.60	1.33	1.65
Northern	3	4.02	5.40	1.34	1.80
Ocmulgee	5	6.60	6.08	1.32	1.22
Oconee	2	2.70	2.96	1.35	1.48
Ogeechee	3	4.02	3.22	1.34	1.07
Pataula	2	2.70	2.22	1.35	1.11
Paulding	2	2.70	3.87	1.35	1.94
Piedmont	3	4.02	4.12	1.34	1.37
Rockdale	2	2.70	1.92	1.35	0.96
Rome	4	5.32	5.55	1.33	1.39
South Georgia	2	2.70	2.13	1.35	1.07
Southern	5	6.60	6.63	1.32	1.33
Southwestern	3	4.02	2.67	1.34	0.89
Stone Mountain	10	12.70	11.78	1.27	1.18
Tallapoosa	2	2.70	2.81	1.35	1.41
Tifton	2	2.70	2.94	1.35	1.47
Toombs	2	2.70	2.28	1.35	1.14
Towaliga	2	2.70	2.93	1.35	1.47
Waycross	3	4.02	3.55	1.34	1.18
Western	3	4.02	3.63	1.34	1.21

Total as of 12/31/06 193

Color Code:

	New Judgeship Request
	Carryover
	Qualified but Not Requested

Summary: Number of Judges and Details of the Circuit and per Judge Weights

1. New Judgeship Requests: Lists the new judgeship requests and presents the value to qualify, actual weight, and qualification for a recommendation.

Circuit	Value to Qualify	Actual Value to Qualify	Qualification
Alcovy (5 th) ¹	5.32	6.41	Yes
Douglas (4 th)	4.02	4.26	Yes
Flint (4 th)	4.02	4.52	Yes
Mountain (3 rd)	2.70	3.19	Yes
Northeastern (5 th)	5.32	6.60	Yes
Piedmont (4 th)	4.02	4.12	Yes
Southern (6 th)	6.60	6.63	Yes
Tifton (3 rd)	2.70	2.94	Yes

2. Carry Over Request: Lists the circuits in carry over status, the year qualified, and the year the recommendation for consideration by the General Assembly and the Governor expires.

Circuit	Year Qualified	Year of Expiration
Alapaha (3 rd)	2005	2008
Atlanta (20 th)	2006	2009
Brunswick (5 th)	2006	2009

3. Qualified Circuits not Requesting an Additional Judgeship: Lists the circuits that are qualified but did not request an additional by circuit, weight to qualify, and actual weight.

Circuit	Value to Qualify	Actual Value to Qualify
Blue Ridge (2) ²	2.70	3.02
Cherokee (4)	5.32	5.81
Cobb (9) ³	11.52	12.39
Cordele (2) ³	2.70	2.84
Coweta (5) ³	6.60	7.61
Dublin (2) ³	2.70	4.02
Enotah (2) ³	2.70	3.12
Houston (2) ³	2.70	3.72
Northern (3)	4.02	5.40
Oconee (2)	2.70	2.96
Paulding (2)	2.70	3.87
Rome (4)	5.32	5.55
Tallapoosa (2)	2.70	2.81
Towaliga (2)	2.70	2.93

Notes: ¹ Circuits with judgeship in the form (2nd) indicates the judgeship being requested. ² Circuits in the form (2) represent the judges as of 12/31/06. ³ Indicates circuits that added a judge in 2007 or is authorized to add a judge in 2008.

Superior Court Circuit Judgeship Timeline: 1991 - 2007

Circuit	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Alapaha	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Alcovy (created 1972)	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4
Appalachian (created 1983)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3
Atlanta	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	17	17	18	18	19	19	19	19	19	19
Atlantic	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Augusta	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	8	8
Bell-Forsyth (created 1998)								1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Blue Ridge	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Brunswick	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Chattahoochee	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Cherokee	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4
Clayton	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Cobb	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	8	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
Conasauga	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Cordele	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Coweta	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6
Dougherty	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Douglas (created 1983)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Dublin	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Eastern	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Enotah (created 1992)		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Flint	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3
Griffin	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Gwinnett	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	9	9
Houston (created 1971)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Lookout Mountain	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Macon	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Middle	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Mountain	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Northeastern	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Northern	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ocmulgee	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Oconee	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Ogeechee	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Pataula	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Paulding (created 2002)												2	2	2	2	2	3
Piedmont	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Rockdale (created 1983)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Rome	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
South Georgia	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Southern	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5
Southwestern	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Stone Mountain	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Tallapoosa	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	2	2	2	2	2
Tifton	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Toombs	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Towaliga (created 1999)									1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Waycross	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Western	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Total	153	159	159	159	169	169	169	175	176	183	184	189	188	188	188	193	197

*Note - There are 197 judgeships as of June 30, 2007

CHART 1

2006 Circuits, Personnel, and Weighted Caseload

Circuit	Counties	Superior Court	State Court	Juvenile Court	Probate Court	CY06 Weighted Caseload
		Judge Positions Authorized ¹	Judges Authorized ¹	Judges and Associate Judges ¹	Judges Hearing Traffic Cases ¹	
Alapaha	5	2	1	2	4	3.31
Alcovy	2	4	0	3	2	6.41
Appalachian	3	3	0	2	3	3.88
Atlanta	1	19	10	7	0	21.72
Atlantic	6	4	6	3	0	4.24
Augusta	3	8	4	4	1	7.66
Bell-Forsyth	1	2	2	2	0	2.48
Blue Ridge	1	2 ²	2	2	0	3.02
Brunswick	5	4	4	6	1	6.55
Chattahoochee	6	6	2	3	5	6.61
Cherokee	2	4	0	2	2	5.81
Clayton	1	4	4	3	0	4.77
Cobb	1	9	12	4	0	12.39
Conasauga	2	4	0	2	2	4.65
Cordele	4	2	0	1	4	2.84
Coweta	5	5 ³	4	4	2	7.61
Dougherty	1	3	1	2	0	3.36
Douglas	1	3	1	1	0	4.26
Dublin	4	2	1	2	3	4.02
Eastern	1	6	3	3	0	4.91
Enotah	4	2	0	2	4	3.12
Flint	1	3	3	2	0	4.52
Griffin	4	4	2	2	2	4.64
Gwinnett	1	9	6	4	0	8.10
Houston	1	2 ⁴	1	1	0	3.72
Lookout Mountain	4	4	2	4	2	5.21
Macon	3	5	1	2	2	6.23
Middle	5	2	5	2	0	2.69
Mountain	3	2	2	1	1	3.19
Northeastern	2	4	2	2	1	6.60
Northern	5	3	1	2	4	5.40
Ocmulgee	8	5	2	1	6	6.08
Oconee	6	2	0	2	6	2.96
Ogeechee	4	3	4	0	0	3.22
Pataula	7	2	2	2	5	2.22
Paulding	1	2 ⁵	0	2	1	3.87
Piedmont	3	3	1	1	2	4.12
Rockdale	1	2	1	1	0	1.92
Rome	1	4	0	2	1	5.55
South Georgia	5	2	3	2	2	2.13
Southern	5	5	4	6	1	6.63
Southwestern	6	3	1	1	5	2.67
Stone Mountain	1	10	7	4	0	11.78
Tallapoosa	2	2	0	3	2	2.81
Tifton	4	2	3	1	1	2.94
Toombs	6	2	0	1	6	2.28
Towaliga	3	2	0	1	3	2.93
Waycross	6	3	5	2	1	3.55
Western	2	3	1	3	1	3.63
Totals:	159	193	116	117	88	

Notes: ¹ as of 12/31/06 ² 3rd on 01/01/07 ³ 6th on 01/01/07 ⁴ 3rd on 01/01/07 ⁵ 3rd on 01/01/07

CHART 2

CY06 Criminal Filings by Rank and Five-Year Percentage Change Per Judge by Defendant

Circuit	Total Criminal Filings	Rank	% Change CY02 - CY06	Unified Appeals	Felony Defendants	Misdemeanor Defendants	Probation Revocations
Alapaha	1,418	4	-3%	0.00	383	888	148
Alcovy	1,004	14	-16%	0.50	339	331	334
Appalachian	924	21	-14%	0.33	393	270	261
Atlanta	1,093	11	20%	0.00	834	0	259
Atlantic	397	49	-11%	0.00	307	6	85
Augusta	644	38	5%	0.00	392	83	169
Bell-Forsyth	618	39	63%	1.50	405	29	184
Blue Ridge	1,329	5	62%	0.50	625	288	416
Brunswick	659	37	-16%	0.00	532	59	68
Chattahoochee	453	47	-33%	0.00	255	86	112
Cherokee	1,207	7	-41%	0.00	573	361	274
Clayton	846	26	9%	0.00	606	33	208
Cobb	1,458	3	56%	0.00	807	9	642
Conasauga	1,118	10	106%	0.00	426	283	410
Cordele	952	20	3%	0.50	348	244	360
Coweta	1,003	15	32%	0.40	736	80	186
Dougherty	885	24	-13%	0.33	592	19	275
Douglas	989	16	42%	0.00	554	56	379
Dublin	1,266	6	31%	0.00	835	269	162
Eastern	759	31	12%	0.00	474	0	285
Enotah	983	17	41%	0.00	401	398	184
Flint	676	36	3%	0.00	502	24	150
Griffin	576	40	-16%	0.00	457	74	44
Gwinnett	823	28	19%	0.33	568	51	204
Houston	1,184	8	21%	0.00	576	194	415
Lookout Mountain	839	27	95%	0.00	480	126	233
Macon	698	34	-12%	0.60	420	17	260
Middle	550	42	11%	2.00	433	24	91
Mountain	954	19	31%	0.00	533	137	285
Northeastern	1,880	1	272%	0.50	872	782	226
Northern	861	25	43%	0.00	492	151	218
Ocmulgee	912	22	6%	0.20	389	266	256
Oconee	904	23	35%	0.00	512	268	124
Ogeechee	445	48	-24%	0.00	301	9	135
Pataula	755	32	5%	0.00	430	196	130
Paulding	1,032	12	63%	1.50	523	424	84
Piedmont	1,010	13	42%	0.00	461	459	90
Rockdale	543	43	34%	0.00	404	0	140
Rome	1,471	2	58%	0.00	565	425	481
South Georgia	471	46	-28%	0.00	307	51	114
Southern	680	35	-27%	0.00	544	24	111
Southwestern	570	41	-16%	0.00	291	136	143
Stone Mountain	763	29	-13%	0.10	514	0	249
Tallapoosa	1,132	9	120%	0.00	544	432	156
Tifton	541	44	41%	2.00	342	38	159
Toombs	520	45	-26%	0.50	233	195	92
Towaliga	706	33	11%	0.00	399	254	53
Waycross	761	30	8%	0.00	525	51	185
Western	971	18	114%	0.00	515	120	336

Mean: 882 0.24 489 178 215

CHART 3

CY06 Civil Filings by Rank and Five-Year Percentage Change Per Judge

Circuit	Total Circuit Filings (Criminal + Civil)	Rank	% Change CY02 - CY06	Total Civil Filings	Rank	% Change CY02 - 06	General Civil	Domestic Relations
Alapaha	2,866	6	11%	1,448	18	29%	583	865
Alcovy	2,888	5	10%	1,884	3	33%	1,033	851
Appalachian	1,986	32	-16%	1,062	41	-19%	529	533
Atlanta	2,015	31	14%	922	44	8%	267	655
Atlantic	1,547	47	18%	1,150	35	33%	383	768
Augusta	1,754	39	-10%	1,110	38	-16%	302	808
Bell-Forsyth	2,081	29	51%	1,463	16	46%	630	833
Blue Ridge	2,818	7	28%	1,489	13	7%	521	968
Brunswick	2,312	20	18%	1,653	7	42%	696	958
Chattahoochee	1,943	35	-3%	1,491	12	13%	627	864
Cherokee	2,642	10	-25%	1,435	19	-3%	723	712
Clayton	2,182	26	9%	1,336	26	9%	212	1,124
Cobb	2,624	11	24%	1,167	34	-1%	280	886
Conasauga	2,217	23	38%	1,099	39	3%	485	614
Cordele	2,195	24	3%	1,243	29	3%	602	642
Coweta	2,601	12	20%	1,599	8	14%	612	986
Dougherty	1,947	34	-12%	1,062	42	-10%	366	696
Douglas	2,442	16	50%	1,453	17	57%	768	685
Dublin	2,973	4	26%	1,707	6	22%	629	1,078
Eastern	1,439	48	10%	680	49	9%	244	436
Enotah	2,370	17	29%	1,387	22	21%	795	592
Flint	2,504	14	-5%	1,828	4	-7%	931	897
Griffin	1,955	33	-1%	1,380	23	7%	610	770
Gwinnett	1,623	44	-34%	799	47	-55%	240	560
Houston	3,504	1	38%	2,320	1	48%	646	1,674
Lookout Mountain	2,360	19	49%	1,521	11	32%	524	998
Macon	2,256	21	15%	1,558	9	33%	411	1,147
Middle	1,861	37	1%	1,312	27	-3%	467	845
Mountain	2,369	18	23%	1,416	20	18%	607	809
Northeastern	3,124	3	96%	1,244	28	14%	618	626
Northern	2,662	9	54%	1,801	5	60%	757	1,043
Ocmulgee	1,869	36	7%	957	43	9%	494	463
Oconee	2,245	22	6%	1,341	25	-7%	522	819
Ogeechee	1,593	45	-10%	1,149	37	-3%	373	775
Pataula	1,662	43	2%	907	46	0%	392	516
Paulding	3,255	2	50%	2,223	2	44%	1,390	834
Piedmont	2,483	15	78%	1,473	15	116%	816	658
Rockdale	1,693	41	15%	1,150	35	8%	338	813
Rome	2,675	8	32%	1,204	32	10%	553	651
South Georgia	1,551	46	1%	1,080	40	22%	449	631
Southern	1,858	38	-36%	1,179	33	-40%	490	689
Southwestern	1,326	49	-32%	757	48	-41%	382	375
Stone Mountain	2,172	28	-6%	1,409	21	-1%	403	1,006
Tallapoosa	2,506	13	58%	1,374	24	28%	827	547
Tifton	2,069	30	13%	1,529	10	5%	609	920
Toombs	1,736	40	-11%	1,216	30	-4%	483	733
Towaliga	2,184	25	17%	1,479	14	21%	647	832
Waycross	1,680	42	-21%	919	45	-35%	416	503
Western	2,175	27	42%	1,205	31	11%	502	702
Mean:	2,220			1,338			555	783

CHART 4 Population

CY06 U.S. Census Population per Superior Court Judge

2010 GA O.P.B. Projected Population per Superior Court Judge

Circuit	Population per Superior Court Judge	Rank	2010 GA O.P.B. Projected Population per Superior Court Judge	Rank
Alapaha	27,878	45	26,026	46
Alcovy	42,710	21	49,157	13
Appalachian	26,711	46	30,380	44
Atlanta	50,527	12	43,178	24
Atlantic	37,459	33	35,731	37
Augusta	40,534	28	40,780	28
Bell-Forsyth	75,484	3	90,981	3
Blue Ridge	97,664	1	107,072	1
Brunswick	44,695	18	44,725	19
Chattahoochee	42,360	22	41,730	25
Cherokee	35,671	36	39,583	31
Clayton	67,810	6	77,080	5
Cobb	75,481	4	86,209	4
Conasauga	33,599	39	35,206	39
Cordele	30,073	43	30,519	43
Coweta	64,043	7	69,361	7
Dougherty	31,591	42	31,351	42
Douglas	39,852	31	39,745	30
Dublin	36,989	34	37,295	35
Eastern	40,235	29	38,775	32
Enotah	40,689	27	44,433	20
Flint	59,344	10	70,609	6
Griffin	53,333	11	57,568	11
Gwinnett	84,123	2	91,218	2
Houston	63,765	8	64,533	10
Lookout Mountain	42,324	23	44,962	18
Macon	38,502	32	38,448	33
Middle	49,194	13	46,962	15
Mountain	41,305	26	44,285	21
Northeastern	48,475	14	52,107	12
Northern	36,190	35	37,662	34
Ocmulgee	31,783	41	33,734	41
Oconee	35,592	37	33,797	40
Ogeechee	45,359	16	45,923	16
Pataula	25,576	48	25,947	47
Paulding	60,765	9	69,037	8
Piedmont	45,308	17	47,244	14
Rockdale	40,166	30	41,014	27
Rome	23,831	49	23,722	49
South Georgia	43,896	19	43,717	22
Southern	41,708	24	40,103	29
Southwestern	30,002	44	30,201	45
Stone Mountain	72,360	5	66,335	9
Tallapoosa	34,854	38	36,573	36
Tifton	41,674	25	41,428	26
Toombs	25,594	47	25,832	48
Towaliga	32,342	40	35,349	38
Waycross	43,514	20	43,369	23
Western	47,882	15	45,301	17
Mean:	45,323		47,271	

**2007 Circuit Judgeship Requests
by Rank, Weighted Caseload, and Population Per Judge**

Judicial Circuit	Final Rank on Factors 1-4 2007	Current Superior Court Judges	Previous Year Rank of Priority	Factor 1		Factor 2						Factor 3				Factor 4				Total of Ranks	Judicial Circuit
				Weight in Minutes Per Judge	Rank	Felony	Rank	Misdem	Rank	Probation Revocation	Rank	General Civil	Rank	Domestic Relations	Rank	2006 Population Per Superior Court Judge	Rank	2010 Population Per Superior Court Judge	Rank		
ALAPAHA	9	2	2	120,777.28	5	382.50	9	887.50	1	148	8	583.00	9	864.50	4	27,878	11	26,026	11	58	ALAPAHA
ALCOVY	2	4	NA	140,272.19	2	339.50	11	330.50	4	334	2	1033.25	1	851.00	5	42,710	6	49,157	3	34	ALCOVY
ATLANTA	8	19	19	103,420.82	10	834.37	2	0	11	259	4	266.74	11	655.05	10	50,527	2	43,178	7	57	ATLANTA
BRUNSWICK	4	4	4	119,581.57	7	531.75	6	58.75	6	68	11	695.75	5	957.50	1	44,695	5	44,725	5	46	BRUNSWICK
DOUGLAS	5	3	NA	124,155.34	4	554.00	3	55.67	7	379	1	768.00	4	685.00	8	39,852	10	39,745	10	47	DOUGLAS
FLINT	3	2	NA	131,930.91	3	502.00	7	23.67	10	150	7	931.00	2	896.67	3	59,344	1	70,609	1	34	FLINT
MOUNTAIN	7	2	9	116,560.00	8	532.50	5	136.50	5	285	3	607.00	8	808.50	6	41,305	9	44,285	6	50	MOUNTAIN
NORTHEASTERN	1	4	NA	144,344.44	1	872.75	1	782.00	2	226	5	617.50	6	626.25	11	48,475	3	52,107	2	31	NORTHEASTERN
PIEDMONT	6	3	5	120,211.97	6	461.00	8	459.33	3	90	10	815.67	3	657.67	9	45,308	4	47,244	4	47	PIEDMONT
SOUTHERN	11	5	8	96,879.89	11	544.40	4	24	9	111	9	489.80	10	688.80	7	41,708	7	40,103	9	66	SOUTHERN
TIFTON	10	2	NA	107,274.44	9	344.00	10	37.50	8	159	6	609.00	7	919.50	2	41,674	8	41,428	8	58	TIFTON

VOTE ON JUDGESHIP REQUESTS

AUGUST 28, 2007

CIRCUIT REQUESTING

APPROVE

YES

NO

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. ALCOVY (5 TH Judgeship) | _____ | _____ |
| 2. DOUGLAS (4 TH Judgeship) | _____ | _____ |
| 3. FLINT (4 TH Judgeship) | _____ | _____ |
| 4. MOUNTAIN (3 RD Judgeship) | _____ | _____ |
| 5. NORTHEASTERN (5 TH Judgeship) | _____ | _____ |
| 6. PIEDMONT (4 TH Judgeship) | _____ | _____ |
| 7. SOUTHERN (6 TH Judgeship) | _____ | _____ |
| 8. TIFTON (3 RD Judgeship) | _____ | _____ |

Policy Change:

Current Judicial Council Policy requires that each member of the Council fill in all ballots COMPLETELY. This rule extends to voting on judgeship requests and ranking priority. All unranked and/or partially completed ballots will be removed from voting consideration.

SAMPLE BALLOT

PRIORITY RANKING OF JUDGESHIP REQUESTS

AUGUST 28, 2007

(1 = HIGHEST; 11 = LOWEST)

<u>CIRCUIT REQUESTING</u>	<u>RANK</u>
1. ALAPAHA (3 RD Judgeship)	_____
2. ALCOVY (5 TH Judgeship)	_____
3. ATLANTA (20 TH Judgeship)	_____
4. BRUNSWICK (5 TH Judgeship)	_____
5. DOUGLAS (4 TH Judgeship)	_____
6. FLINT (4 TH Judgeship)	_____
7. MOUNTAIN (3 RD Judgeship)	_____
8. NORTHEASTERN (5 TH Judgeship)	_____
9. PIEDMONT (4 TH Judgeship)	_____
10. SOUTHERN (6 TH Judgeship)	_____
11. TIFTON (3 RD Judgeship)	_____

Policy Change:

Current Judicial Council Policy requires that each member of the Council fill in all ballots COMPLETELY. This rule extends to voting on judgeship requests and ranking priority. All unranked and/or partially completed ballots will be removed from voting consideration.

SAMPLE BALLOT

Alcovy Judicial Circuit

Summary

Original Request and Comment Letters Alcovy Judicial Circuit Request for the 5th Judgeship

<u>Date of Letter</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Content</u>
May 15, 2007	Chief Judge John M. Ott Alcovy Judicial Circuit	Request study for 5 th judgeship or circuit split but not both
August 2, 2007	Representative Doug Holt District 112	Letter of support for 5 th judgeship cites increase in population and delay in circuit split
August 3, 2007	Representative Len Walker District 107	Letter of support for 5 th judgeship cites population growth



John M. Ott
Judge Superior Courts
Alcovy Judicial Circuit

NEWTON AND WALTON
COUNTIES

303 SOUTH HAMMOND DRIVE
SUITE 221
MONROE, GEORGIA 30655
VOICE: (770) 267-1339
FACSIMILE: (770)266-1630

May 15th, 2007

Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears
Chairperson, Judicial Council
501 State Judicial Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334



Re: Request for Additional Judgeship Study

Dear Chief Justice Sears:

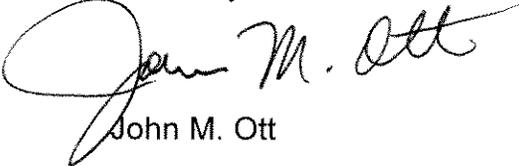
Please allow this letter to serve as a request for the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to conduct a study to determine the need for an additional judgeship for the Alcovy Judicial Circuit.

As you may remember, two years ago this circuit requested that a study be conducted for both a potential circuit split and an additional judgeship. At the Judicial Council Meeting held in August of 2005, I withdrew the request for an additional judgeship based upon a desire for the circuit to be split. The Judicial Council unanimously approved sending to the Legislature a request that the Alcovy Judicial Circuit be split. A bill to split the circuit was introduced in the 2006 Legislature, but died in committee without being considered. In the 2007 Legislature our bill to split the circuit was reintroduced and unanimously passed the Judiciary Committee but failed to make it out of the Rules Committee, and thus was not acted on by the full House of Representatives. In meeting with various legislators, it has been my impression that they do not make a distinction between splitting a circuit and additional judgeships. Late in the 2007 Session, we discovered that Speaker Richardson was not aware of the circuit split because it had not been included in the AOC letter relating the request of the Judicial Council from the August 2006 meeting (the second year of the three year viability of the Judicial Council's action on the circuit split in 2005.) That was entirely our fault, and is a lesson we have learned and hope to correct in the 2008 session of the Legislature.

The Alcovy Judicial Circuit desperately needs relief, either in the form of a circuit split, or an additional judge. If we cannot get the circuit split, we need the services of an additional judge. If the Legislators want the circuit split to take the place of a judgeship, then it is my feeling that that judgeship needs to be from this circuit.

I look forward to the results of the study. If you or Mr. Ratley need any further information, please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Ott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "O".

John M. Ott

cc: Mr. David Ratley



House of Representatives

DOUG HOLT
REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 112
70 STAGG TRACE
SOCIAL CIRCLE, GEORGIA 30025
(770) 786-3005 (H)
E-MAIL: doug.holt@house.ga.gov

COVERDELL LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 401
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334
(404) 656-0152
(404) 651-8086 (FAX)



STANDING
COMMITTEES:

EDUCATION
INSURANCE
TRANSPORTATION
SPECIAL RULES - SECRETARY

8/2/2007

David Ratley
Director, Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street SW
Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30334-5900

Dear Mr. Ratley,

I wish to strongly recommend the addition of a fifth judge to the Alcovy Judicial Circuit. There are a number of reasons why I feel this new judgeship is needed.

First and foremost is the raw fact of massive population growth. Newton County has been ranked as high as seventh fastest growing in the nation in the last five years; it is currently 11th. Walton County is not far behind. The dramatic increase of the Circuit's population in the last five years inevitably translates into an increased caseload. Thoughtfully administered justice – for every citizen – is difficult to deliver when a court system is so overloaded that efficiency in processing cases, of necessity, becomes an ever higher priority.

Second is simple equity to the two counties. The trend for superior courts in the first row of “near-metro” counties has been to create a district for each county. With this in mind, I have co-sponsored legislation to split the Circuit in each of the last two legislative sessions. Neither bill passed, because other circuits were considered to have more pressing needs. Thus, the Alcovy Circuit must clearly be given staffing consideration to meet its challenges.

Finally, I think it is significant that the judges of the Alcovy Judicial Circuit have refrained from asking for an additional judgeship, in order to place emphasis on splitting the Circuit. They have voluntarily taken on our growing caseload for two years, without complaint. That is a very commendable sacrifice for the public good. But it is unreasonable to ask that it continue. As an elected official, I understand very well how often public servants must handle increased workloads without increased compensation. Since the circuit has not been split, I think it is only fair to relieve some of the pressure on its judges by adding another position.

Please feel free to contact me for any clarification or further information you need.

Sincerely,



House of Representatives

LEN WALKER
REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 107
2972 LAKE EDMOND ROAD
LOGANVILLE, GEORGIA 30052

E-MAIL: lwalker@nfumc.org

STATE CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 401
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334
(404) 656-5139

STANDING
COMMITTEES:
HUMAN RELATIONS & AGING-CHAIRMAN
APPROPRIATIONS
RULES
HIGHER EDUCATION

August 3, 2007

Mr. David L. Ratley
Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 300
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5900



Dear Mr. Ratley,

This letter serves as my urgent appeal to the Judicial Council to add a 5th Superior Court Judge in the Alcovy Judicial Circuit. The caseload for the Alcovy Circuit continues to increase due to an extraordinary population growth in our area. Chief Judge John M. Ott has compiled the pertinent data that clearly indicates the need for an additional judgeship. I trust the Judicial Council will give careful consideration to his findings.

The citizens in the Alcovy Judicial Circuit are extremely blessed to have Judges Ott, Ozburn, Johnson and Benton serving on the bench. They are men of enormous ability and energy. We certainly want them to have all the necessary resources to continue their valuable work.

I deeply appreciate your consideration in this important matter. Please call upon me if I can assist any further.

Sincerely,

Len Walker
Chairman, Human Relations & Aging
State Representative, District 107

Cc: The Honorable John Ott, Chief Judge, Superior Court
The Honorable Samuel Ozburn, Judge, Superior Court
The Honorable Horace Johnson, Jr., Judge, Superior Court
The Honorable Eugene Benton, Judge, Superior Court

Douglas Judicial Circuit

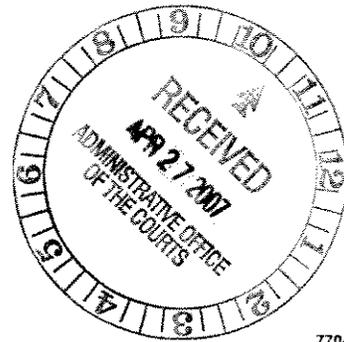
Summary

Original Request and Comment Letters Douglas Judicial Circuit Request for the 4th Judgeship

<u>Date of Letter</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Content</u>
April 25, 2007	Chief Judge Robert J. James Judge David T. Emerson Judge Donald B. Howe Douglas Judicial Circuit	Request study for 4 th judgeship
July 26, 2007	Mr. David McDade District Attorney Douglas Judicial Circuit	Letter of support for the 4 th judgeship cites population



SUPERIOR COURT
DOUGLAS JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
DOUGLASVILLE, GEORGIA 30134



770-920-7265
770-920-7227
770-920-7417

ROBERT J. JAMES, CHIEF JUDGE
DAVID T. EMERSON, JUDGE
DONALD B. HOWE, JR., JUDGE

April 25, 2007

The Honorable Leah Ward Sears
Chief Justice
Georgia Supreme Court
Suite 300
244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334-5900

Re: Judgeship request for the Douglas Judicial Circuit

Dear Justice Sears,

We request that the Administrative Office of the Court conduct a study of the Douglas Judicial Circuit to determine the need for a fourth judge.

Sincerely,

Robert J. James
Chief Judge

David Emerson
Judge

Donald B. Howe
Judge

cc: David L. Ratley, Director ✓

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Douglas Judicial Circuit
Douglas County Courthouse - 2nd Floor
8700 Hospital Drive
Douglasville, GA 30134
(770) 920-7292



David McDade
District Attorney

July 26, 2007

David L. Ratley
Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 300, 244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30334-5900

RE: Request for 4th Superior Court Judgeship for the Douglas Judicial Circuit

Mr. Ratley:

It is my heartfelt belief that the creation of a 4th superior court judgeship for the Douglas Judicial Circuit a.k.a. Douglas County, can't happen soon enough. I wholeheartedly support the request and encourage the Judicial Council to look favorably upon the request.

Douglas County is an incredibly dynamic county in terms of growth and the problems and issues that naturally accompany rapid development such as we are experiencing here. Where we were once considered a quiet, little sleepy bedroom community, we are now right in the middle of tremendous changes both in terms of commercial development as well as residential development.

I have served as a prosecutor in Douglas County since 1982 when I began my career as an assistant district attorney in a four person district attorney's office. I was fortunate to be elected as district attorney in 1990 and now due to growth and changes in our community I oversee a staff of almost thirty-five employees.

The additional personnel that would be available as a result of the creation of a new judgeship would be greatly appreciated and well needed.

Although our current judges do an excellent job of monitoring and managing case loads so that cases, both civil and criminal, move efficiently through the court system, the ever increasing demands on our system demand that we have sufficient resources although we are squeezing every ounce of efficiency possible out of our current resources, we must have help if we are going to have any chance of keeping up with the demands placed upon us.

In closing, simply put, I'm overwhelmingly supportive of the request for a 4th judgeship because we need it and need it now.

If I can be of further assistance please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. McDade', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David McDade
District Attorney
Douglas Judicial Circuit

DMD/dcr

cc: Robert J. James, Chief Superior Court Judge
David T. Emerson, Superior Court Judge
Donald B. Howe, Superior Court Judge

Flint Judicial Circuit

Summary

Original Request and Comment Letters Flint Judicial Circuit Request for the 4th Judgeship

<u>Date of Letter</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Content</u>
May 23, 2007	Chief Judge Arch W. McGarity Flint Judicial Circuit	Request study for 4 th judgeship
July 25, 2007	Representative Steve Davis District 109	Letter of support for the 4 th judgeship cites delay and backlog
August 7, 2007	Chief Judge Arch W. McGarity Flint Judicial Circuit	Letter of support for 4 th judgeship cites population growth, increases in criminal activity, business growth, and above the state average civil filings



THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF HENRY COUNTY

ARCH W. MCGARITY
CHIEF JUDGE
KELLY C. HAWKINS
SECRETARY

HENRY COUNTY COURTHOUSE
McDONOUGH, GEORGIA 30253
OFFICE: (770) 288-7907

May 23, 2007

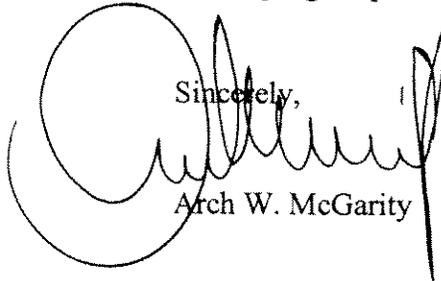
Honorable Leah Ward Sears
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Georgia
State Judicial Building, Fifth Floor
40 Capitol Square, S. W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

In Re: Commission of Study for Additional Judgeship

Dear Chief Justice Sears,

I have been advised by our District Court Administrator , Fred Roney, that his preliminary case count for Flint Circuit indicates that we would qualify for a fourth judge. Therefore, I am requesting that the Administrative Office of the Courts conduct a formal study to determine if an additional judgeship is warranted for the Flint Judicial Circuit.

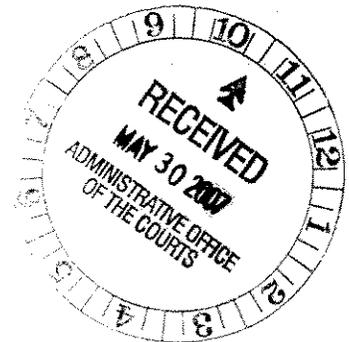
Sincerely,



Arch W. McGarity

AWM/kh

cc: Mr. David L. Ratley





House of Representatives

STEVE DAVIS
REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 109
SERVICE TO:
CITY OF MCDONOUGH
CITY OF STOCKBRIDGE
HENRY COUNTY
E-MAIL: steve.davis@house.ga.gov

COVERDELL LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 601
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334
(404) 656-0254
(404) 651-8088 (FAX)

**STANDING
COMMITTEES:**
CHILDREN & YOUTH
INSURANCE
TRANSPORTATION
STATE INSTITUTIONS AND PROPERTY

July 25, 2007

David L. Ratley, Director
Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street, Suite 300
Atlanta, Georgia 30034

RE: Flint Judicial Circuit Request for a 4th Superior Court Judgeship

Dear Mr. Ratley,

I am writing in support of the recent letter sent to you from Chief Judge Arch W. McGarity concerning an additional, 4th Superior Court judgeship, in the Flint Judicial Circuit.

As Chief Judge McGarity indicated in his letter, our preliminary case count indicates that we should qualify for a fourth judge in our circuit. In addition, the population within our circuit has been growing steadily, placing a strain on our judicial services. It is imperative that the Flint Circuit be approved for a 4th Superior Court judgeship to enable the court to provide adequate services to the people of our circuit. I am concerned about my constituents and the availability of a court system that is not subject to delay and a backlog of cases.

I would greatly appreciate your kind consideration in this matter. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at your convenience. In addition it would be my honor to carry the legislation in the Georgia House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

Steve Davis
Representative, District 109

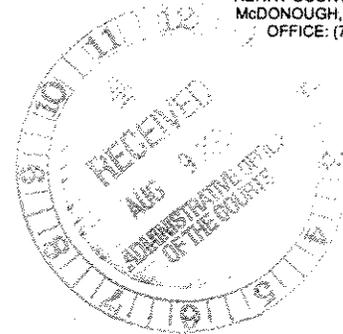


THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF HENRY COUNTY

ARCH W. MCGARITY
CHIEF JUDGE
KELLY C. HAWKINS
SECRETARY

HENRY COUNTY COURTHOUSE
McDONOUGH, GEORGIA 30253
OFFICE: (770) 288-7907

August 7, 2007



Mr. David L. Ratley, Director
Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street, Suite 300
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5900

In Re: Creation of a Fourth Judgeship in Flint Judicial Circuit

Dear Mr. Ratley,

I am writing this letter in support of the Flint Judicial Circuit's request for the creation of a fourth judgeship. In addition to the case count, I offer the following information:

1. Henry County's population continues to grow at or above eight percent (8%) annually.
2. As our county becomes more urban, the criminal activity increases not only in volume but in the seriousness and complexity of crimes committed (ie. murder, armed robbery, and gang related crimes).
3. In the last year we have experience a forty percent (40%) increase in new business growth.
4. Population per judge is 61,500 and steadily increasing.
5. Our civil case filings are approximately 2000 per judge which is well above the State average of 1200 per judge.

I ask that you give due consideration to my request for the creation of a fourth judgeship in the Superior Court of Henry County, Flint Judicial Circuit

Sincerely,

Arch W. McGarity, Chief Judge
Flint Judicial Circuit

AWM/kh

Mountain Judicial Circuit

Summary

Original Request and Comment Letters Mountain Judicial Circuit Request for the 3rd Judgeship

<u>Date of Letter</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Content</u>
April 23, 2007	Chief Judge Ernest H. Woods, III	Request study for 3 rd judgeship
July 31, 2007	Senator Nancy Schaefer District 50	Letter of support for the 3 rd judgeship cites growth and increases in dockets filed
August 6, 2007	President Nina M. Svoren Mountain Judicial Circuit Bar Association	Letter of support for the 3 rd judgeship cites delay in probation hearings and domestic temporary hearings



SUPERIOR COURTS
MOUNTAIN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF GEORGIA
ERNEST H. WOODS, III, Chief Judge

HABERSHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE
P.O. BOX 485
CLARKESVILLE, GEORGIA 30523

TELEPHONE 706-754-6274
FAX 706-754-4722

April 23, 2007

Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears
Chairperson of the Judicial Council
507 State Judicial Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

RE: Request for additional judgeship

Dear Madam Chief Justice:

Please accept this as the request for an additional superior court judgeship for the Mountain Judicial Circuit.

With warm regards, I remain,

Sincerely,

Ernest H. Woods, III
Chief Judge

cc: ✓ Mr. David L Ratley
Senator Nancy Schaefer
Representative Ben Bridges
Representative Jeannette Jamison
Representative Charles Jenkins



NANCY SCHAEFER
District 50
P.O. Box 294
Turnerville, Georgia 30580
Tel: (706) 754-1998
Fax: (706) 754-1803



COMMITTEES:
Secretary, Retirement
Banking and Financial Institutions
Economic Development
Ethics
Special Judiciary

323 - A Coverdell Legislative Office Building
18 Capitol Square, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
Tel: (404) 463-1367
Fax: (404) 463-1388

The State Senate
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

E-mail: senatormancyschaefer@alltel.net

July 31, 2007

Mr. David L. Ratley, Director
Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 300
244 Washington Street SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

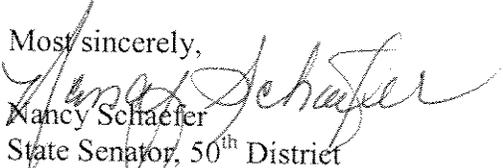
Dear Mr. Ratley,

Having grown up the daughter of Superior Court Judge, Lamar Smith of the Mountain Judicial Circuit, I am very much aware of heavy caseloads. Also, due to the fact that I live in the Mountain Judicial Circuit area, I am very much aware of the growth and the needs in the counties and the increased numbers of Dockets filed.

The leadership of the Mountain Judicial Circuit would agree, I am sure, as to the call for a 3rd Superior Court judge.

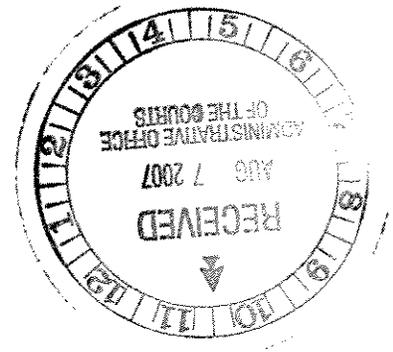
Therefore, I continue to support the certification for a 3rd Superior Court judgeship in the Mountain Judicial Circuit.

Most sincerely,


Nancy Schaefer
State Senator, 50th District



Mountain Judicial Circuit Bar Association
P.O. Box 1004
Toccoa, GA 30577
(706)886-0200



Nina M. Svoren, President
L. Allyn Stockton, Vice President
J. Bruce Harkness, Sr., Treasurer

August 6, 2007

Mr. David L. Ratley
Director
Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 300
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Ga 30334-5900

Re: Third Superior Court Judgeship / Mountain Judicial Circuit

Dear Mr. Ratley:

As president of the Mountain Judicial Circuit Bar Association, and as a practicing attorney in this Circuit, I can assure you that many in our membership would welcome the addition of a third superior court judge. After learning that your office was seeking comments in this regard, the Public Defender called to advise me that they are having to wait four and one-half months for probation violation hearings and three months for bond hearings. Lawyers who practice in domestic relations law have been concerned for quite some time about two and one-half month or greater delays in holding temporary hearings. There is some concern that these delays encourage the overuse of ex parte relief in order to avoid conflicts over custody and visitation.

If you would like further information, please do not hesitate to call.

Cordially,

Nina M. Svoren
President,
Mountain Judicial Circuit Bar Association

Northeastern Judicial Circuit

Summary

Original Request and Comment Letters Northeastern Judicial Circuit Request for the 5th Judgeship

<u>Date of Letter</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Content</u>
June 20, 2007	Chief Judge C. Andrew Fuller Northeastern Judicial Circuit	Request study for 5 th judgeship
August 7, 2007	Mr. Lee Darragh District Attorney	Letter of support for 5 th judgeship cites use of visiting judges and retired judges



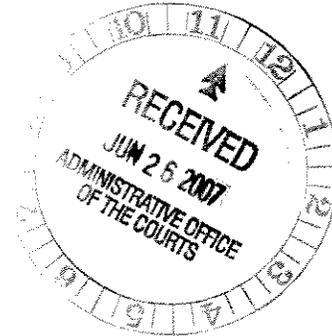
Superior Courts

OF THE

Northeastern Judicial Circuit

C. ANDREW FULLER, JUDGE
P.O. BOX 3362
GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA 30503
(770) 531-6861
FACSIMILE (770) 533-7678

DAWSON, HALL
COUNTIES



June 20, 2007

Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears
Chairman, Judicial Council of Georgia
Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 550, 244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5900

**RE: REQUEST FOR STUDY TO DETERMINE THE NEED FOR
 ADDITIONAL JUDGESHIP**

Dear Chief Justice Sears:

On behalf of the Superior Court Judges of the Northeastern Judicial Circuit, it is hereby requested that the Judicial Council of Georgia approve a study by the Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts to determine the need for an additional judgeship.

Your consideration of this request for our case count is greatly appreciate, and if you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

C. Andrew Fuller

New
Ltrs

CA



**LEE DARRAGH
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NORTHEASTERN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
HALL COUNTY / DAWSON COUNTY**

August 7, 2007

P.O. Box 1690
Gainesville, Georgia 30503
(770) 531-6965
Fax: (770) 531-6970
email: ldarragh@hallcounty.org

Mr. David Ratley
Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street, S.W., Suite 300
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5900

Dear Mr. Ratley:

I write in response to your inquiry of July 16, 2007 concerning any comments I may have about a fifth superior court judgeship in the Northeastern Judicial Circuit.

A fifth judge is needed. Frequently, to appropriately handle the caseload, our judges have used visiting judges, and there is a retired judge in our circuit who is kept quite busy with overload. A fifth judge would also speed the disposition of criminal cases, always a desirable goal.

Thank you for your solicitation of and consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Lee Darragh
District Attorney

LE/er

Piedmont Judicial Circuit

Summary

Original Request and Comment Letters Piedmont Judicial Circuit Request for the 4th Judgeship

<u>Date of Letter</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Content</u>
May 31, 2007	Chief Judge Robert W. Adamson Judge David Motes Judge Joseph H. Booth Piedmont Judicial Circuit	Request for 4 th judgeship cites population growth and building of new courthouses as firm commitment of community to investment to judicial needs
July 19, 2007	Senator Nancy Schaefer District 50	Letter of support for the 4 th judgeship
July 23, 2007	Representative Terry England District 108	Letter of support for the 4 th judgeship cites population growth and building of new courthouses
August 7, 2007	Chief Judge Robert W. Adamson Judge David Motes Judge Joseph H. Booth Piedmont Judicial Circuit	Supplemental material, 12 pages, to support request for a 4 th judgeship, consists of text, graphs, and blue prints
August 7, 2007	Ms Gloria Wall Clerk of Superior Court Barrow County	Letter of support for the 4th judgeship cites increase in filings
August 8, 2007	Representative Timothy A. Harper Clerk of Superior Court Banks County	Letter of support for the 4 th judgeship
August 9, 2007	Ms Allison Mauldin Acting District Attorney	Letter of support for the 4th judgeship cites growth in population and crime



ROBERT W. ADAMSON, CHIEF JUDGE
SUPERIOR COURT, BARROW COUNTY
PIEDMONT JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

May 31, 2007

David Ratley, Director
Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 300
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5900



Dear Mr. Ratley:

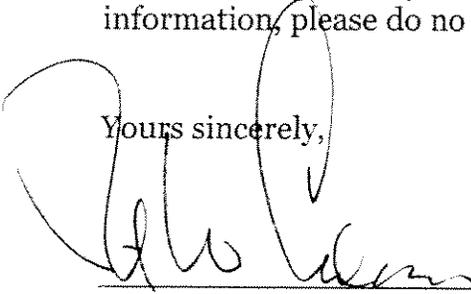
The Piedmont Judicial Circuit respectfully requests a study to determine the need for a fourth Superior Court Judge. We believe the tremendous growth in the population of both Barrow and Jackson counties coupled with the consequent increase in the number of Dockets filed in 2006 justifies this request. The year-over-year increase in Dockets filed from 2005 to 2006 exceeded 29%.

Further, the counties of Banks, Barrow and Jackson are committed to investing in their judicial system. They are committed to providing the Courtroom facilities, office space and support personnel to handle a four-judge judicial circuit. Jackson County has a state-of-the-art Courthouse, completed in 2004. Barrow County broke ground on May 23, 2007 for a new Courthouse which is expected to open in February, 2009. Similarly, Banks County has completed the planning process for renovation and expansion of the existing Courthouse which will be completed by January 1, 2009.

We are preparing a comprehensive study to include all the information normally required by the Administrative Office of the Courts. We will submit this after we reconcile our numbers with those of the AOC.

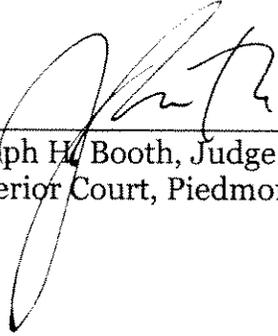
Thank you for your consideration in this matter. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,


Robert W. Adamson, Chief Judge
Superior Court, Piedmont Judicial Circuit



David Motes, Judge
Superior Court, Piedmont Judicial Circuit



Joseph H. Booth, Judge
Superior Court, Piedmont Judicial Circuit

cc: Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears

NANCY SCHAEFER
District 50
P.O. Box 294
Turnerville, Georgia 30580
Tel: (706) 754-1998
Fax: (706) 754-1803



302 - B Coverdell Legislative Office Building
18 Capitol Square, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
Tel: (404) 463-1367
Fax: (404) 657-3217

The State Senate
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

COMMITTEES:
Retirement, Vice Chairman
Ethics, Secretary
Appropriations
Banking and Financial Institutions
Economic Development
Science and Technology, Ex Officio

July 19, 2007

David L. Ratley, Director
Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 300
244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

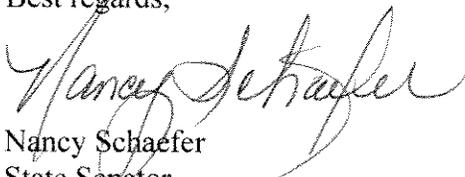
Dear Mr. Ratley:

As the daughter of a Superior Court Judge of the Mountain Judicial Circuit, I know what growth in an area plus increased numbers of Dockets filed can create. Therefore, I am writing in support of the certification for a 4th Superior Court judge in the Piedmont Judicial Circuit.

I am confident of the community's support of this request and urge your support and recommendation also.

Thank you for your understanding and assistance with this matter.

Best regards,


Nancy Schaefer
State Senator
District 50





House of Representatives

TERRY ENGLAND
REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 108
1060 OLD HOG MOUNTAIN ROAD
AUBURN, GEORGIA 30011
(770) 867-1601 (O)
(770) 867-8096 (H)
(770) 867-2160 (FAX)
E-MAIL: englandhomeport2@alltel.net

COVERDELL LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 501
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334
(404) 656-0177
(404) 463-2196 (FAX)

July 23, 2007

STANDING
COMMITTEES:

AGRICULTURE – VICE CHAIR
APPROPRIATIONS
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS - SECRETARY
INTRAGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATIONS

David L. Ratley, Director
Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 300
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Re: Piedmont Judicial Circuit

Dear Mr. Ratley,

As you are aware, in 2006, Judge Robert W. Adamson requested your office to conduct a study of the need for an additional Superior Court Judge for the Piedmont Circuit. At that time I expressed to you the tremendous growth that our area has experienced over the last decade. Needless to say, this situation has not changed in the last twelve months.

Barrow County, which I represent, sits at the southern end of the Circuit and continues to be on of the fastest growing counties in Georgia coming in at number 5 in 2006 for the state and 23rd in the nation. I see no reason that this should change or slow in the foreseeable future, thus continuing to increase the burden placed on the three currently seated judges.

All three counties that make up the Circuit have either just finished, or are starting new or renovated court facilities in order to handle the increasing pressure from cases generated by the growing population of the area. I know that Barrow County is committed to providing the resources that would be required of the additional judgeship, as I am sure the other counties involved would.

I certainly appreciate you and your staff assisting us in this matter. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Terry England
Georgia House of Representatives
District 108

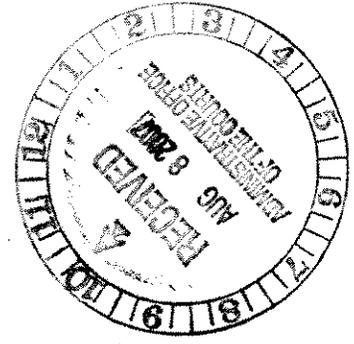
Cc: Judge Adamson



ROBERT W. ADAMSON, CHIEF JUDGE
SUPERIOR COURT, BARROW COUNTY
PIEDMONT JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

August 7, 2007

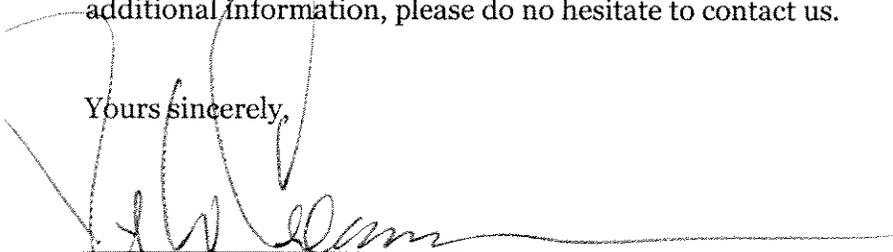
David L. Ratley, Director
Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street, S.W., Suite 300
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5900

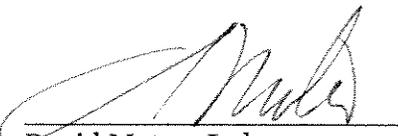


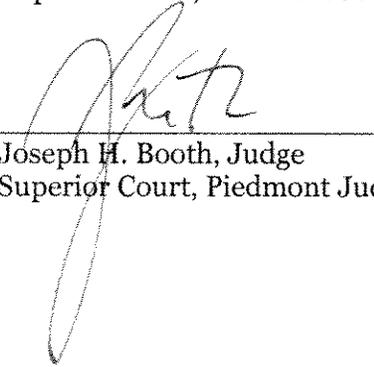
Dear Mr. Ratley:

We would like to supplement our request for a 4th superior court judgeship in the Piedmont Judicial Circuit with this information we have compiled. We appreciate your sharing it with the Judicial Council. Thank you for your assistance in this matter. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,


Robert W. Adamson, Chief Judge
Superior Court, Piedmont Judicial Circuit


David Motes, Judge
Superior Court, Piedmont Judicial Circuit


Joseph H. Booth, Judge
Superior Court, Piedmont Judicial Circuit

Piedmont Judicial Circuit

The Piedmont Judicial Circuit is continuing to grow faster than the Georgia average. The attached charts show that the Circuit as a whole is expected to grow at a rate of 3.14% for 2007, whereas Georgia is expected to have a growth rate of 1.54%. Although the growth rate is expected to slow over the next couple of years, the growth rate is still expected to be positive and the Piedmont Judicial Circuit is still expected to outpace Georgia. In 2010, the Piedmont Judicial Circuit is projected to grow at 2.88% in comparison with the state average of 1.41%. Coincident with this growth, the number of attorneys living in the Piedmont Judicial Circuit grew 29.4% from 2005 to 2006.

Based on this tremendous growth and wanting to serve the people of the Piedmont Judicial Circuit, all the governing bodies of the circuit are committed to supporting a 4th superior court judgeship. The three counties of Banks, Barrow and Jackson have all demonstrated their support through their investment in the court system. The County Commissioners have entered into an Inter-governmental Agreement that funds two Law Clerks in addition to the state-funded Law Clerk. The three counties are also considering a Court Administrator position to assist in organizational issues with the Courts and to serve Agencies associated with the Courts.

The Piedmont Judicial Circuit has also been very aggressive in pursuing Pre-Trial Diversion initiatives. In 2006, 301 defendants who were arrested on various charges went through the Pre-Trial Diversion Program and 305 more who wrote bad checks entered the Pre-Trial Diversion Program prior to being arrested. The program is for 90-days and is comprised of various components which may include drug counseling, community service and paying a fine.

Jackson County

Jackson County is the 32nd fastest growing county in America based on growth rate between January 2000 and July 2006 for all counties that began the period with more than ten thousand inhabitants, according to recent U.S. Census Bureau estimates. The outstanding growth of the last six years has made Jackson County the seventh fastest growing county in the State of Georgia and the 32nd fastest in the nation.

In August 2004 Jackson County completed a state of the art courthouse addressing all aspects of needs by State, Superior and Juvenile Courts. This facility incorporates all the latest security plans and accommodations. There is office space in the judge's suite to accommodate a 4th superior court judge and there are enough courtrooms to simultaneously conduct hearings.

Barrow County

Barrow County has experienced phenomenal growth over the past several years. According to CNNMoney.com, Barrow County was 23rd in the nation in job growth from 2000-2006 at 36.5%. It was noted that textiles once dominated the local economy, but no more as housing and retail have taken over amid the prolonged population boom. Two massive highway projects will help support further growth.

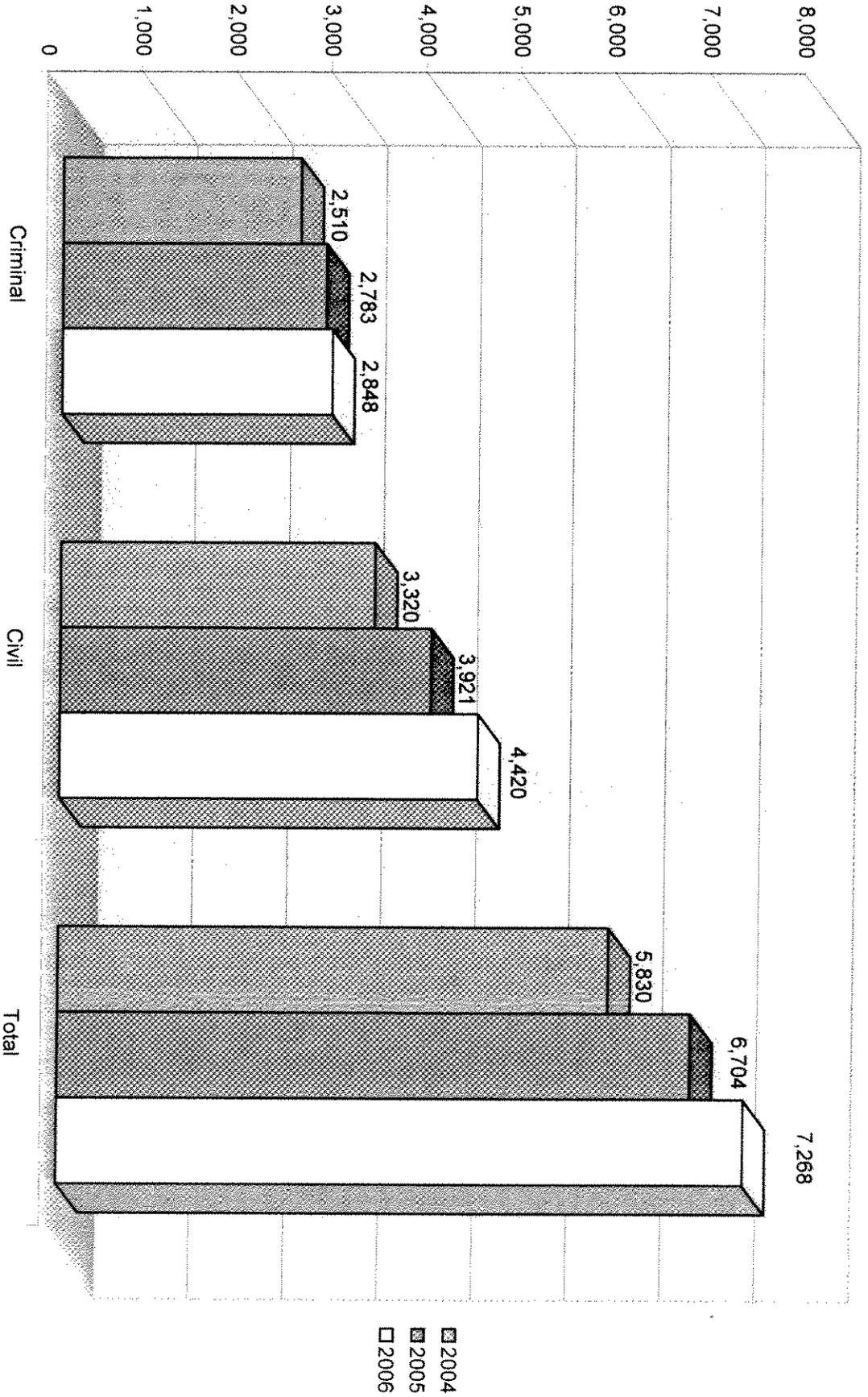
On May 30, 2007 Barrow County broke ground on its new Courthouse and Detention Center. This facility, as well, will allow the courts to address not only the current caseloads but those of an additional judge. The total budget for the facility is \$46,400,000, which has already been funded by the sale of bonds backed by SPLOST. The new jail will be 109,720 square feet, the new courthouse will encompass 100,236 square feet and the completed facility is scheduled to open in February of 2009.

Banks County

Banks County has completed the planning process for renovation of the courthouse to add additional courthouse space and provide expanded facilities for the Clerk of Court and other officers. The completion date on this renovation is expected to be on or before January 1, 2009.

The above referenced commitments to capital funding evidence these counties positive response to the rapidly expanding population and the increasing needs of the counties. With these facilities, there will be adequate office space, support personnel and courtroom facilities to handle a 4 judge judicial circuit. We believe that few, if any, counties within the state have moved so progressively to provide their investment into our judicial system. The three counties, additionally, have continued to provide extensive support to the DA's office, Juvenile Court, Public Defender's Office and all other court associated functions.

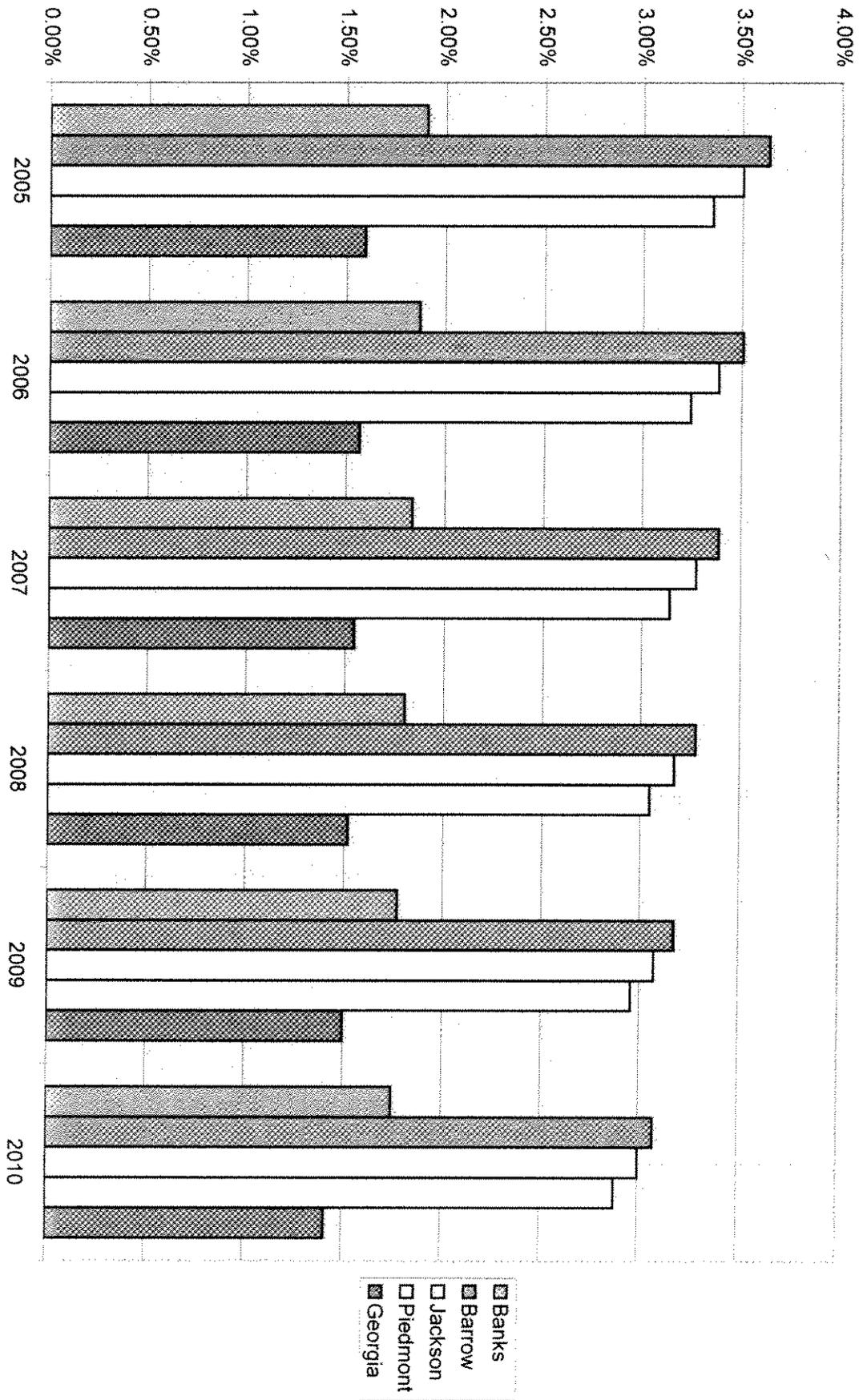
Piedmont Judicial Circuit Dockets



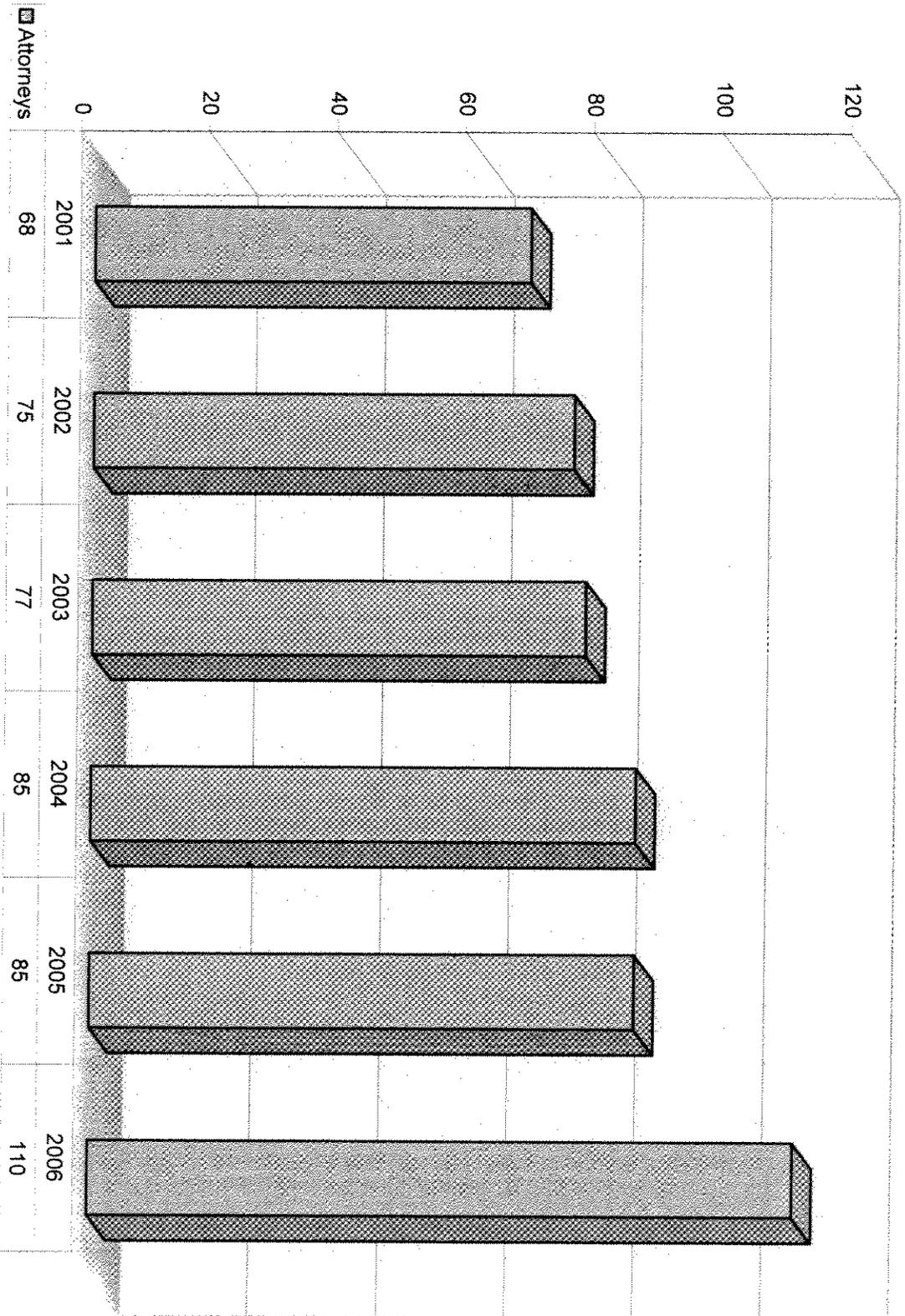
Population Growth Rates

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Banks	1.91%	1.87%	1.84%	1.80%	1.77%	1.75%
Barrow	3.63%	3.51%	3.39%	3.28%	3.17%	3.07%
Jackson	3.50%	3.38%	3.27%	3.17%	3.07%	3.00%
Piedmont	3.35%	3.24%	3.14%	3.04%	2.95%	2.88%
Georgia	1.59%	1.57%	1.54%	1.52%	1.50%	1.41%

Population Growth Rates



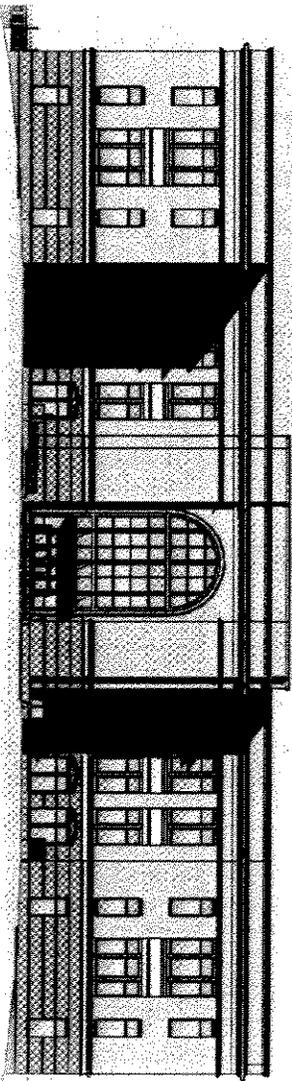
Attorneys Living in the Piedmont Judicial Circuit



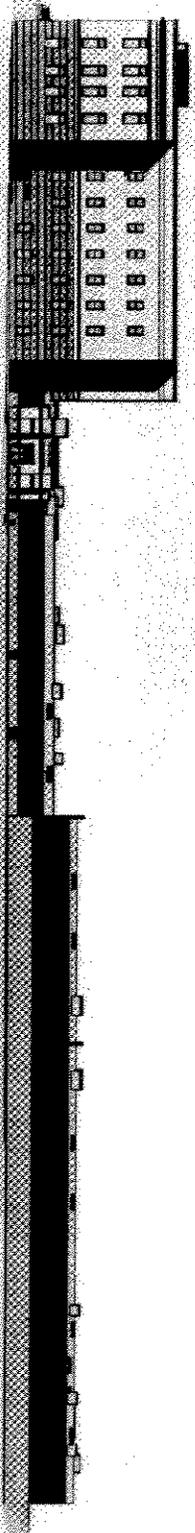
Attorneys



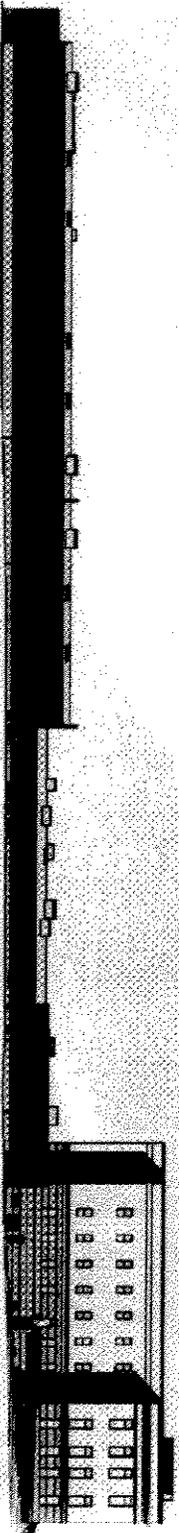
Barrow County Criminal Justice Facility



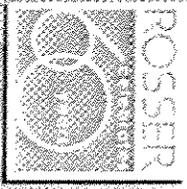
North Elevation



West Elevation



East Elevation



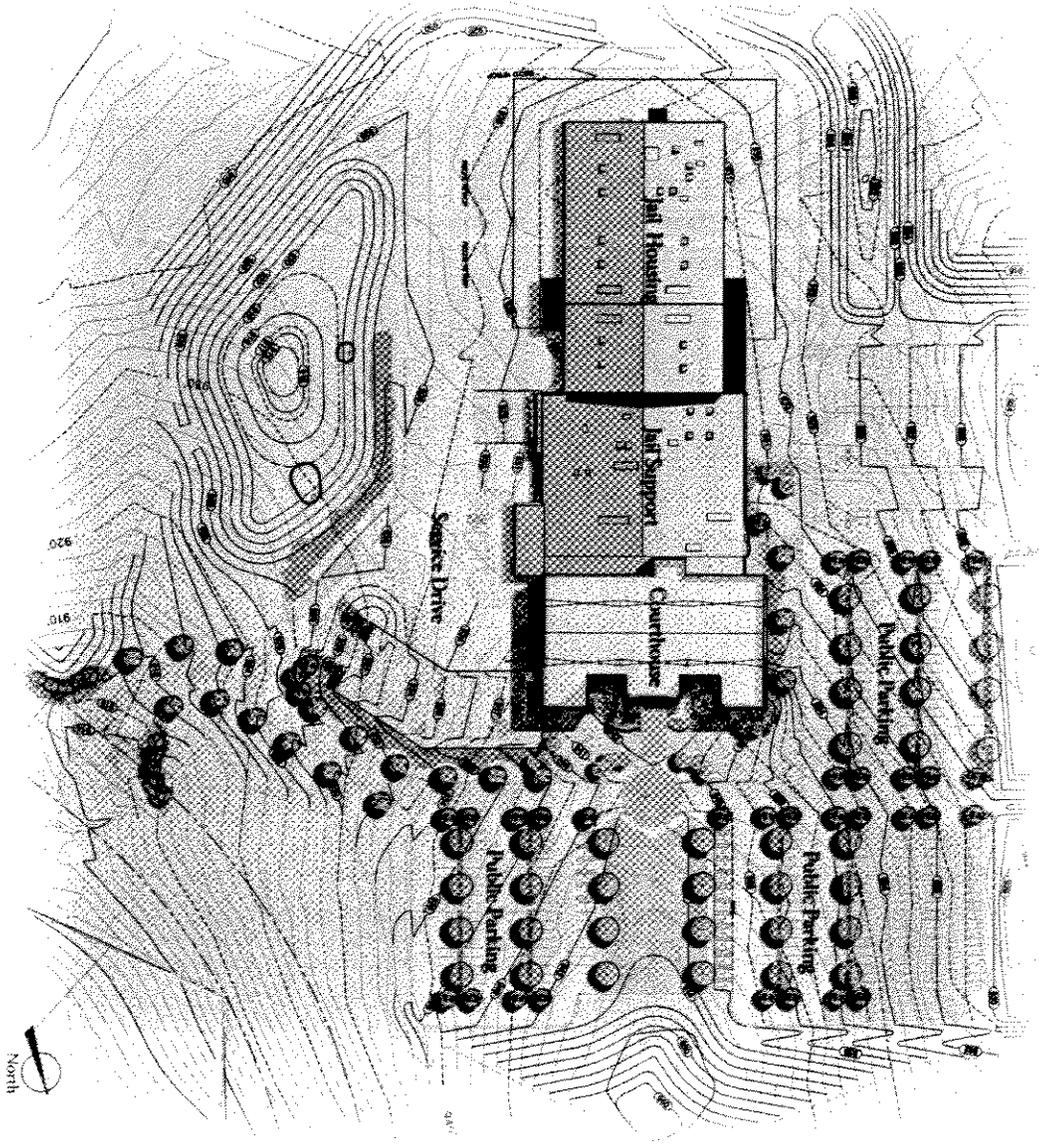
Architect



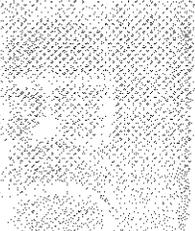
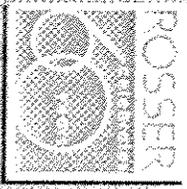
Construction Manager



Barron County Criminal Justice Facility

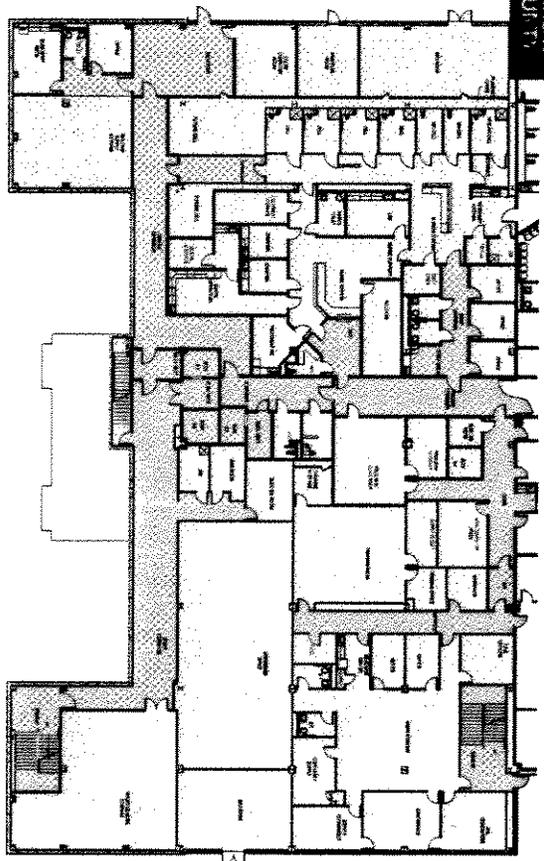


Site Plan

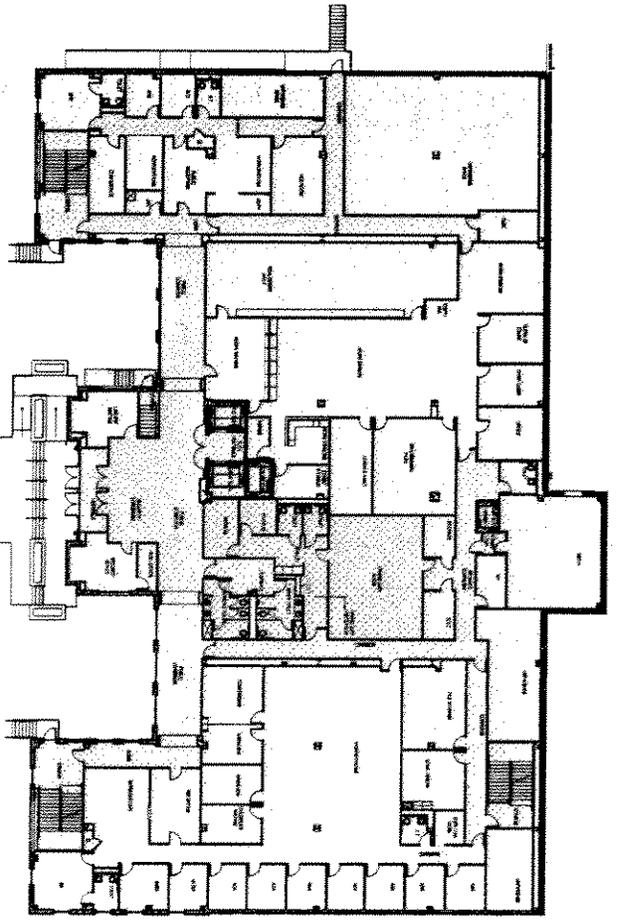




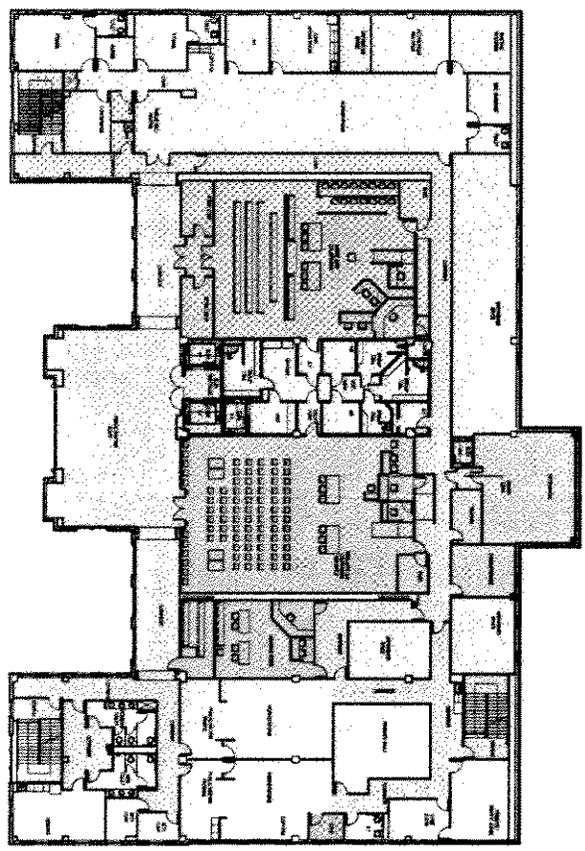
Barrow County Criminal Justice Facility



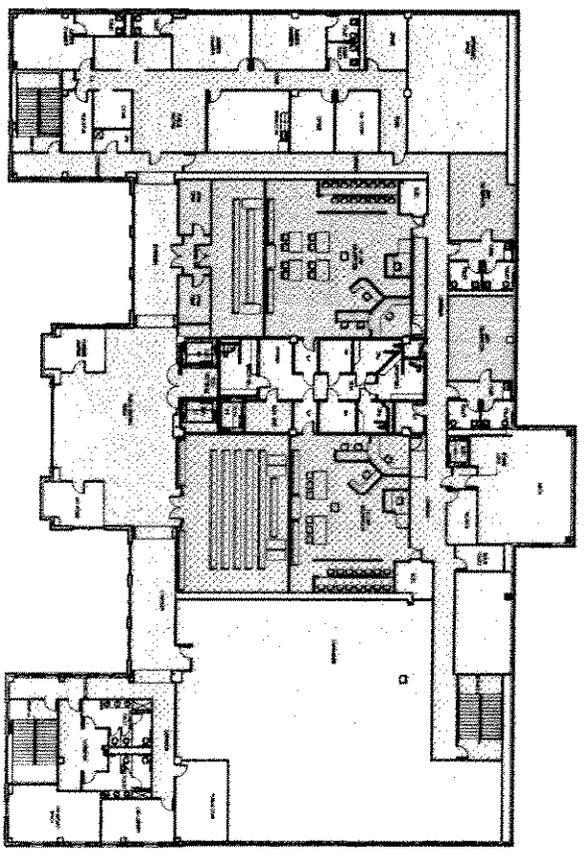
Courthouse Floor Plan - Level 0



Courthouse Floor Plan - Level 1



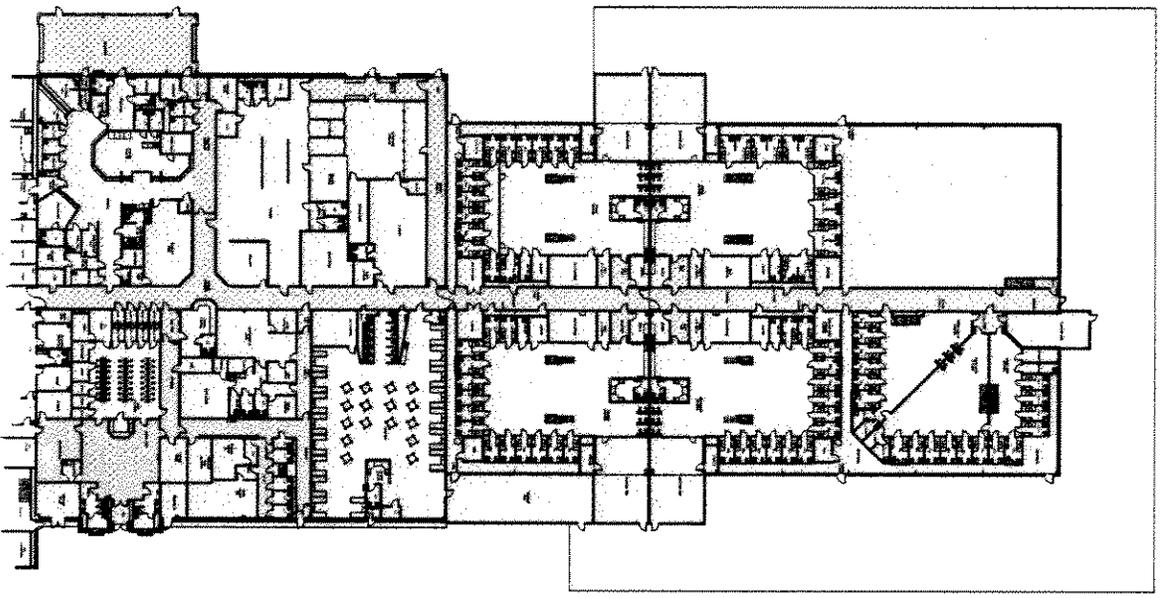
Courthouse Floor Plan - Level 2



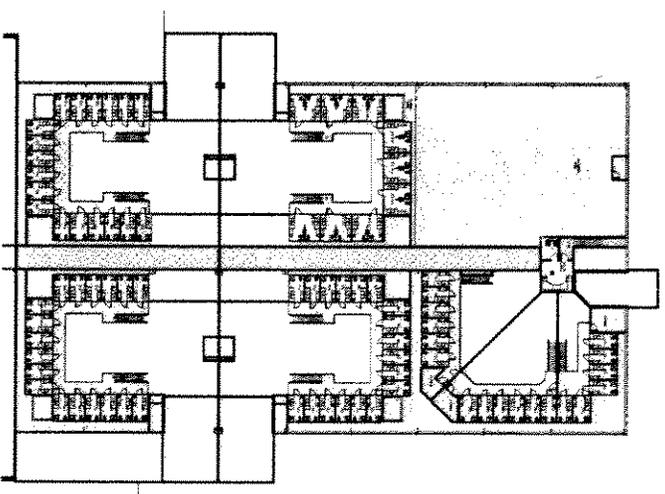
Courthouse Floor Plan - Level 3



Barrow County Criminal Justice Facility

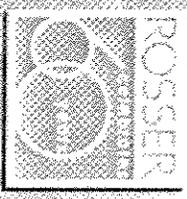


Jail Floor Plan - Level 0



Jail Floor Plan - Mezzanine

-  Public Circulation
-  Administration and General Operations
-  Mechanical and Storage
-  Secured Jail Area
-  Future Development Spaces
-  Courts

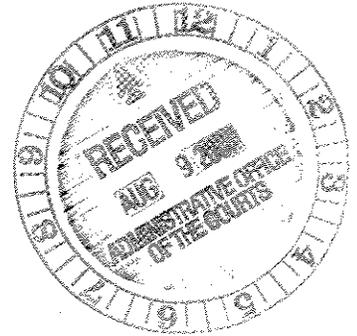


**BARROW
COUNTY**
**CLERK OF
SUPERIOR COURT**

Gloria M. Wall
Clerk

August 7, 2007

David L. Ratley
Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 300
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30334-5900



Dear Mr. Ratley:

This is in response to your letter dated July 16, 2007 regarding a fourth Superior Court judgeship in the Piedmont Judicial Circuit. A fourth judge in this circuit is very badly needed. The entire circuit, and especially Barrow County, is experiencing growth pains. In Barrow County we are currently building a new Criminal Justice Facility because our current facility is not adequate to meet the needs of this county.

I took office as Clerk of Superior Court in Barrow County in January, 1997. During that year we filed 1,532 Civil Cases and 851 Criminal Cases. In 2006, ten years later, this office filed 2,365 Civil Cases and 1,825 Criminal Cases. That is an increase of 1,807 cases in these two areas of Superior Court. This is just the increase in Barrow County, not circuit wide.

With the judges juggling courts in three counties, it is often hard to get cases on a calendar and therefore difficult to clear court calendars or take care of court matters in an expeditious and efficient manner.

I have seen quite an evolution in the manner in which both Civil and Criminal cases are being handled. The child support guidelines and TPO requirements are just two areas that have changed dramatically.

If I can be of further service or offer any additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gloria M. Wall".

Gloria M. Wall

TIMOTHY A HARPER
CLERK, SUPERIOR COURT, BANKS COUNTY
144 YONAH HOMER ROAD, SUITE 8
HOMER, GA 30547
(706) 677-6240 PHONE
(706) 677-6294 FAX

August 8, 2007

Judicial Council of Georgia
Attn: David Ratley
AOC
Suite 300, 244 Washington St, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334



Dear Council Members:

It has been my pleasure to serve the citizens of Banks County as Clerk of Superior Court for the past 14½ years. During my years as Clerk, the County has shown a tremendous amount of growth. In 1993, my office handled 342 Civil cases and 190 Criminal cases. In 2000, we handled 460 Civil cases and 221 Criminal cases. As of July, we have already filed 431 Civil cases and 155 Criminal cases. As you can see, the numbers are climbing higher, and this year appears to be a record breaker for the number of filings.

Banks County is the smallest county in the Piedmont Judicial Circuit, and the judges visit the county weekly for Plea days, Civil hearings, and court weeks. In years gone by, we had court two times a year in April & October. However, now it sometimes feels like we have court all of the time. Should the Piedmont Judicial Circuit get a 4th Judge, it would benefit Banks, Barrow and Jackson Counties tremendously. It would speed up the process of having cases heard, and keep the calendars up-to-date and as clear as possible. At the present time, there is no way that three judges can serve three counties with the volume of cases that Barrow and Jackson Counties presently have, and the increasing volume of cases in Banks County.

I would like to see a fourth Judge in the Piedmont Judicial Circuit and hope that you will approve the request.

Timothy A Harper
Clerk, Banks County Superior Court

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy A. Harper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
PIEDMONT JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

BANKS, BARROW AND JACKSON COUNTIES
P.O. BOX 1220
WINDER, GA 30680
TELEPHONE (770) 307-3040
FACSIMILE (770) 307-3046



August 9, 2007

Mr. David Ratley
Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 300
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30334-5900

Re: Piedmont Judicial Circuit

Dear Mr. Ratley:

Thank you for the opportunity for me to express my support for a fourth Superior Court Judge for the Piedmont Judicial Circuit on behalf of the District Attorney's office. Over the years, the Piedmont Judicial Circuit has not only grown in population, but in crime as well. We have seen a swell of influx of people from the metro areas into our formerly rural circuit. With that, inevitably, comes the criminal element. We have seen a rise in the drug use and distribution, violent crimes and gang activity in all three counties.

The District Attorney's office has been fortunate to receive additional personnel from the counties to handle the increased case load. However, the number of Superior Court judges has remained the same. Without a fourth judge to handle the growing backlog, I fear the victims of crime will suffer and the ability to prosecute cases will be compromised.

If you need additional information, I will be happy to assist in any way I can.

Sincerely,

Allison T. Mauldin
Acting District Attorney

Southern Judicial Circuit

Summary

Most Recent Request and Comment Letters Southern Judicial Circuit Request for the 6th Judgeship

Date of Letter
July 30, 2007

Author
Chief Judge H. Arthur McLane
Southern Judicial Circuit

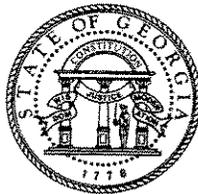
Content
Request out of time study for the
6th judgeship cites "...confusion
as to the calculation of the carry
over period."

H. ARTHUR MCLANE
CHIEF JUDGE
POST OFFICE BOX 1349
VALDOSTA, GEORGIA 31603-1349
TELEPHONE: 229/333-5130
FACSIMILE: 229/245-5223

HARRY JAY ALTMAN, II
JUDGE
POST OFFICE BOX 1734
THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA 31799-1734
TELEPHONE: 229/228-6276
FACSIMILE: 229/225-4128

FRANK D. HORKAN
JUDGE
POST OFFICE BOX 2227
MOULTRIE, GEORGIA 31776-2227
TELEPHONE: 229/616-7445
FACSIMILE: 229/616-7447

RICHARD M. COWART
JUDGE
POST OFFICE BOX 806
VALDOSTA, GEORGIA 31603-0806
TELEPHONE: 229/333-7620
FACSIMILE: 229/245-5308



State of Georgia
Superior Courts
Southern Judicial Circuit

July 30, 2007

JAMES E. (JIM) HARDY
JUDGE
POST OFFICE BOX 2037
THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA 31799-2037
TELEPHONE: 229/228-6370
FACSIMILE: 229/228-6369

ROY M. LILLY
SENIOR JUDGE
POST OFFICE BOX 71
THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA 31799-0071
TELEPHONE: 229/226-8668
FACSIMILE: 229/226-0411

TIM C. HENDRICK
COURT ADMINISTRATOR
POST OFFICE BOX 2227
MOULTRIE, GEORGIA 31776-2227
TELEPHONE: 229/616-7474
FACSIMILE: 229/616-7447

**BROOKS, COLQUITT, ECHOLS,
LOWNDES & THOMAS COUNTIES**

Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears
Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington St., S.W., Suite 200
Atlanta, Ga 30334

Re: Sixth Judgeship
Southern Judicial Circuit

Dear Chief Justice Sears:

I am, by this letter, requesting an out of time study be granted to determine the need for an additional judgeship for the Southern Judicial Circuit.

As you know, in 2004, we requested a study by the Judicial Council to determine the need for a sixth judgeship. The study revealed that the circuit did qualify for the additional judgeship. However, the 2005 Legislature did not create the judgeship. We were advised that the request for the judgeship would carry-over for three years, through the 2008 Legislature.

It now appears there is confusion as to the calculation of the carry-over period. Therefore, as a matter of caution, I am submitting, by this letter, a request for a sixth judgeship. If, however, the three year carry-over period has not expired, please disregard this request, but consider the carry-over request.

We appreciate any consideration that may be given to us. If you need to speak with me, please advise and I will gladly make myself available.

Sincerely yours,

H. Arthur McLane

HAMc:bh
xc: Mr. David Ratley
Mr. John Cowart



Tifton Judicial Circuit

Summary

Original Request and Comment Letters Tifton Judicial Circuit Request for the 3rd Judgeship

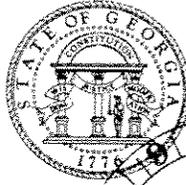
<u>Date of Letter</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Content</u>
April 23, 2007	Chief Judge Gary C. McCorvey Tifton Judicial Circuit	Request study for 3 rd judgeship or circuit split cites steady influx of population, pro se litigants, and agriculturally based lower income
May 10, 2007	Representative Austin Scott District 153	Letter of support cites expanding area, domestic cases, and pro se litigants
August 9, 2007	Rob Reinhardt Attorney	Letter of support for 3 rd judgeship

SUPERIOR COURTS

TIFTON JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
Irwin, Tift, Turner and Worth Counties

CHIEF JUDGE GARY C. MCCORVEY
POST OFFICE BOX 7090
TIFTON, GEORGIA 31793-7090

Phone: (229) 386-7904
Fax: (229) 386-7977



JUDGE BILL REINHARDT
POST OFFICE BOX 806
TIFTON, GEORGIA 31793-0806

Phone: (229) 386-7906
Fax: (229) 386-7927

April 23, 2007

Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears
Chairperson, Judicial Counsel
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5900



RE: Request for comparative, objective study for the creation of an additional judgeship or change in circuit boundaries for the Tifton Judicial Circuit

Dear Chief Justice Sears:

Thank you for your letter dated April 20, 2007, informing me of the opportunity to seek an additional judgeship or change in circuit boundaries for the Tifton Judicial Circuit. Please consider this letter as the application of the Judges of the Superior Courts of our circuit for the study to be conducted here and for an appropriate remedy to be approved.

I am aware of the costs to the State of Georgia and to the four counties of our circuit in making such addition or changes, but I take this opportunity to point out that, neither historically nor frequently, has the Tifton Judicial Circuit run to the Council to seek assistance in this area. I do not recall requesting any change within the past six (6) years that I have been Chief Judge, nor do I recall former Chief Judge John D. Crosby conferring with me about requesting any such change during the four (4) years before that. The last time that the Tifton Judicial Circuit received an additional judgeship was in 1980 or 1981, at which time the current level of two (2) judges was achieved.

Operating with the same two (2) judgeships for a period of more than twenty-five years has not been without its challenges, particularly in the last ten (10) years. We have attempted to handle the increasing caseload difficulties locally, but the time has now come for the State to shoulder the responsibility of the Superior Courts here.

Since the devastation of the hurricanes in Florida and the Gulf Coast in general in the last two (2) years, our circuit has seen a steady influx of people who desire the climate of "Florida" but with the safety from the violent weather and lower cost of living here in south Georgia. More people mean more court activity.

May 1, 2007

Sears

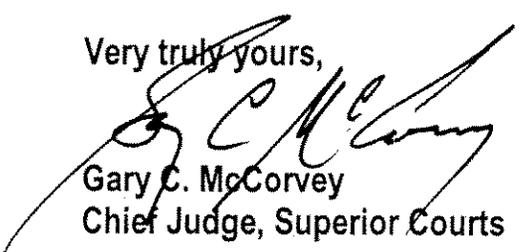
Page 2

Our circuit also has an increasing challenge with respect to *pro se* litigants, particularly in the area of domestic relations. This challenge is based in large part on the fact that three (3) of our four (4) counties are primarily agricultural; hence, a lower *pre capita* income is found there than in the more prosperous middle and northern Georgia circuits. Another judgeship here would foster better access to justice for our low income population since cases with *pro se* litigants obviously involve more "judge time" than similar cases with lawyers involved. Quite frankly, an additional judgeship would enable us to have a "domestic relations" specialist judge to better serve our citizens.

There are other reasons we desire an additional judgeship or circuit boundary change, and I am available at your convenience to further discuss these reasons.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



Gary C. McCorvey
Chief Judge, Superior Courts

cc Austin Scott
Jay Roberts
Ed Rynders
Joseph Carter



House of Representatives

AUSTIN SCOTT
REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 153
1610 JOHN ORR DR., BLDG F
P. O. BOX 988
TIFTON, GEORGIA 31793
(229) 386-5128 (O)
(229) 388-0896 (FAX)
E-MAIL: austin.scott@house.ga.gov

STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 218
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334
(404) 656-5132
(404) 656-6700 (FAX)

STANDING
COMMITTEES:

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS - CHAIRMAN
LEGISLATIVE & CONGRESSIONAL
REAPPORTIONMENT
RULES
WAYS & MEANS

May 10, 2007

Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears
Chairperson, Judicial Counsel
244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30334



Dear Chief Justice Sears:

I am writing in support of the recent letter sent to you from Chief Judge Gary McCorvey concerning an additional judgeship for the Tifton Judicial Circuit.

As Chief Judge McCorvey stated in his letter, we have a growing number of cases in our judicial circuit. We are obviously in a rapidly expanding area which places our judicial services under a strain to keep up with the demand. The addition of another judgeship would greatly aid in relieving some of the pressure, specifically in the area of domestic and pro se cases. I am concerned about my constituents and the availability of a court system that is not subject to delay and a backlog of cases.

I would appreciate your kind consideration in this matter. Should you have any concerns you would like to discuss with me, I would be available to discuss them with you at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Austin Scott

AS/pmn

REINHARDT, WHITLEY, SUMMERLIN & PITTMAN, P.C.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

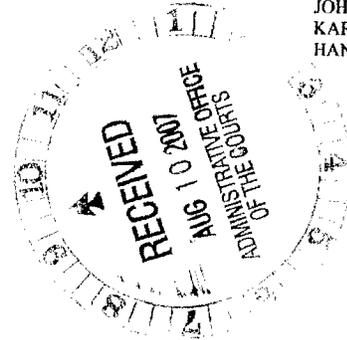
1001 NORTH CENTRAL AVENUE
P.O. DRAWER 1287
TIFTON, GEORGIA 31793-1287
TELEPHONE (229) 382-6135
FAX NO. (229) 386-5949

WRITER'S EXT. 12
EMAIL: rreinhardt@rwws.com

BOB REINHARDT
GLENN WHITLEY
ROB REINHARDT

JOHN REINHARDT
KAREN SUMMERLIN
HANK PITTMAN

August 9, 2007



David Ratley
Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 300
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5900

Re: Superior Courts – Tifton Circuit

Dear Mr. Ratley:

Having rotated out of many State Bar jobs, I regret that I have not had an opportunity to visit with you recently. I have always been impressed with the competence you bring to issues involving the operation of our trial courts; and for that reason I respectfully request your support of a proposal to add a third Superior Court judgeship in the Tifton Circuit.

As I spoke to civic and professional groups while serving as President of the State Bar of Georgia, I found that a consistent complaint was the time and expense required to resolve disputes through our judicial system. In addition, I became convinced that the changing complexion of our society requires innovative improvement to the administration of justice through our courts.

In attempting to understand the problems, I have reviewed the information concerning caseloads that your office assembles and which demonstrates the heavy workload our Superior Court faces in the criminal and domestic areas. My impression is that in the civil arena, sophisticated business clients have adopted alternate dispute resolution models in order to minimize the cost of resolving commercial disputes, both in time and money. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of civil cases tried; but with mixed results. Requests from our business community for an experienced and specialized "Business Court" have resulted in attempts to put one together in the metro area. And as I constantly remind my Atlanta friends, rural communities such as ours also have business disputes and would benefit from a business court. Of course, judicial resources must be shared with domestic disputes [which perhaps underutilize ADR] and criminal matters.

REINHARDT, WHITLEY, SUMMERLIN & PITTMAN, P.C.

David Ratley

Page 2 of 2

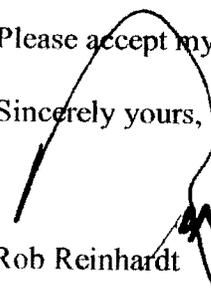
8/9/07

We currently have two Superior Court Judges. Both bring energy and talent to the bench. However, the volume of their criminal and domestic caseloads is such that their availability is limited and we have inadequate judicial resources to improve our system utilizing methods that are being piloted throughout the state. The Tifton circuit could provide better service to our citizens if we were able to coordinate a family court to take a holistic approach to domestic and family issues. Crafting these improved services is not possible with the current caseloads that must be coordinated and serviced by our sitting judges. Where judges have time to craft improved procedures, more efficient and effective methods of approaching drug cases and criminal cases presenting mental health issues are being developed. We receive constant information from our District Attorney's office that its caseloads continue to increase, reflecting the need for more judicial time.

We are mindful of the formidable job of allocating resources throughout the state to our court system. However, we in good faith state our need and urge your consideration of and support for a third superior court judgeship for the Tifton Circuit.

Please accept my best personal regards and thanks for your attention to this letter.

Sincerely yours,



Rob Reinhardt

jb

cc: Honorable Gary McCorvey, Chief Judge/Tifton Circuit
Honorable Bill Reinhardt, Judge/Tifton Circuit
Paul Bowden, District Attorney
John Mobley, Public Defender
Bryce Johnson, President/Tifton Bar Association

Alapaha Judicial Circuit

Summary

Most Recent Request and Comment Letters Alapaha Judicial Circuit Request for the 3rd Judgeship

<u>Date of Letter</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Content</u>
April 30, 2007	Chief Judge Brooks E. Blich, III Alapaha Judicial Circuit	Request for study to determine the need for a 3 rd judgeship
July 29, 2007	Ms. Cathy Harris Helms District Attorney, Alapaha Judicial Circuit	Letter of support for carryover of request for 3 rd judgeship cites growth in criminal cases and lack of State Courts in four of the five counties



BROOKS E. BLITCH, III

Chief Judge
P.O. Box 335
Homerville, Georgia 31634
(912) 487-2280

DANE PERKINS

Adm. Judge
P.O. Box 606
Nashville, Georgia 31639
(912) 686-2180

Superior Courts
ALAPAHA JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

ATKINSON, BERRIEN, CLINCH, COOK AND LANIER COUNTIES

April 30, 2007

H.W. LOTT

Senior Judge
P.O. Box 348
Lenox, Georgia 31637
(912) 686-3153

W.D. KNIGHT

Senior Judge
P.O. Box 846
Nashville, Georgia 31639
(912) 686-7400

Honorable Leah Ward Sears
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Georgia
507 State Judicial Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Chief Justice Sears:

I have been told by our Court Administrator, John Cowart, that his preliminary count of the caseload indicated that our circuit would qualify for a third judge. Therefore, I am requesting that the Administrative Office of the Courts conduct a formal study to determine if an additional judgeship is needed in the Alapaha Circuit.

Sincerely,

Brooks E. Blitch, III

cc: Mr. David L. Ratley ✓
Suite 300, 244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334





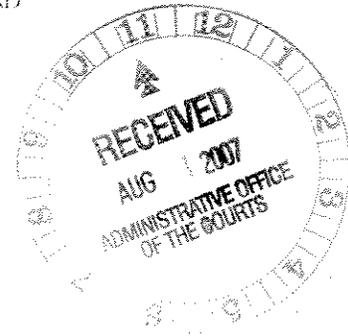
CATHY HARRIS HELMS

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

ALAPAHA JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
ATKINSON, BERRIEN, CLINCH, COOK AND
LANIER COUNTIES

July 29, 2007

David L. Ratley
Director, Administrative Office of the Courts
Judicial Council of Georgia
Suite 300
244 Washington Street SW
Atlanta GA 30334-5900



RE: Carryover Status of Additional Judgeship in the Alapaha Judicial Circuit

Dear Mr. Ratley:

I thank you for your letter dated July 16, 2007, requesting my input concerning our circuit's carryover status in connection with the request for a third superior court judgeship. Please consider this letter as my response and I respectfully request you convey it to the Judicial Council.

As you may recall from my previous letter, when I took office as District Attorney in 2005, there was no systematic record-keeping in the circuit regarding the criminal caseload. I initially implemented a MS Access database system within my office to keep track of our cases. In 2006, we successfully incorporated this database into a new web-based database called Tracker which is maintained by PAC.

Since March of 2005, we have opened 6,159 criminal cases. (A "case" is counted as any charge or charges against one or more individuals arising out of the same act or transaction; it is *not* each individual warrant.) There are currently 1,782 cases pending in the circuit. During this time period, we have opened an average of 195 criminal cases per month and resolved on average 140 cases each month. My four assistants and I each carry a caseload of approximately 336 cases. This is an extremely heavy caseload per prosecutor.

PLEASE RESPOND
TO ADDRESS CHECKED

P.O. BOX 158
NASHVILLE, GEORGIA 31639
PHONE: 229.686.7015
FAX: 229.686.7170

COOK COUNTY COURTHOUSE
ADEL, GEORGIA 31620
PHONE: 229.896.3102
FAX: 229.896.5031

LANIER COUNTY COURTHOUSE
LAKELAND, GEORGIA 31635
PHONE: 229.482.2013
FAX: 229.482.2014

P.O. BOX 128
PEARSON, GEORGIA 31642
PHONE: 912.422.7111
FAX: 912.422.7516

Page 2
David L. Ratley Letter
July 29, 2007

Another point to consider is that four (4) of the five (5) counties in this circuit do not have a state court, so the superior court also handles all misdemeanor criminal cases. While I cannot speak to the civil caseload, as you can see the criminal caseload in this circuit is sizeable.

From my perspective, an additional superior court judgeship is needed in this circuit to adequately handle the criminal caseload.

I thank you for the opportunity to address the Judicial Council and appreciate your interest in our circuit. If you or the Judicial Council have any questions, please feel free to contact me and I will be happy to address them.

Sincerely yours,



Cathy Harris Helms
chelms@pacga.org

Atlanta Judicial Circuit

Brunswick Judicial Circuit

Summary

Most Recent Request and Comment Letters Brunswick Judicial Circuit Request for the 5th Judgeship

<u>Date of Letter</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Content</u>
April 27, 2007	Chief Judge James R. Tuten, Jr. Brunswick Judicial Circuit	Request to acknowledge carryover status for 5 th judgeship
July 31, 2007	Representative Jerry Keen House Majority Leader District 179	Letter of support for the 5 th judgeship cites population growth
August 1, 2007	Representative Cecily A. Hill District 180	Letter of support for an additional judgeship cites population
August 3, 2007	President Robert W. Guy, Jr. Camden County Bar Association	Letter of support for carryover status for 5 th judgeship cites population growth and large geographical area of circuit
August 6, 2007	Representative Roger Lane District 167	Letter of support for 5 th judgeship Cites population growth also notes no State Court in Camden County with an active Drug/DUI court
August 8, 2008	Mr. Tony Thaw Chair Glynn County Board of Commissioners	Letter of support for 5 th judgeship cites fiscal costs of boarding inmates in other counties



JUDGE JAMES R. TUTEN, JR.
SUPERIOR COURTS OF GEORGIA
BRUNSWICK JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
GLYNN COUNTY COURTHOUSE
BRUNSWICK, GEORGIA 31520

POST OFFICE BOX 1473
BRUNSWICK, GEORGIA 31521

TELEPHONE (912) 554-7372
FAX (912) 264-8145

April 27, 2007

Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears
Chair, Judicial Council of Georgia
Suite 300
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30334-5900

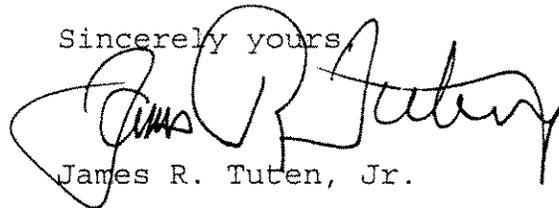
Dear Chief Justice Sears:

This request is in response to your recent notification that the Council has authorized the Administrative Office of the Courts to accept requests for studies to determine the need for additional judgeships in the Georgia Superior Courts.

As Chief Judge of the Superior Courts of the Brunswick Judicial Circuit, and on behalf of the other active Judges of the circuit, I hereby submit our formal request that the Administrative Office of the Courts conduct a study to determine the need for an additional judgeship for this circuit.

Please note that the Judicial Council recommended a fifth Superior Court Judgeship for this circuit last year, and this is a carryover request. We feel that the request for an additional judgeship in this Circuit is fully warranted, and we appreciate the Council's consideration.

Sincerely yours,



James R. Tuten, Jr.

JRT, JR/cf

cc: David L. Ratley, Director
Administrative Office of the
Courts



House of Representatives

JERRY KEEN
REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 179
POST OFFICE BOX 24290
ST. SIMONS ISLAND, GEORGIA 31522
(912) 634-4500 (O)
(912) 634-4522 (FAX)
EMAIL: jlkeen@bellsouth.net

338 STATE CAPITOL
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334
(404) 656-5052
(404) 656-5902 (FAX)

MAJORITY LEADER
STANDING COMMITTEES:

APPROPRIATIONS
ETHICS
PUBLIC UTILITIES &
TELECOMMUNICATIONS
RULES

July 31, 2007

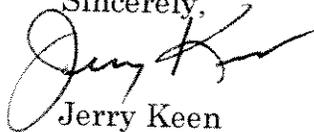
Mr. David L. Ratley
Suite 300
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5900

Dear Mr. Ratley,

Please find attached the population projections for 2020, that indicate Camden and Glynn Counties are expected to add population at a significantly greater rate than the state as a whole. The counties include about two-thirds of the population of the Brunswick Judicial Circuit. The increase in the workload of the Circuit already reflects that trend, as the civil and criminal caseloads have increased dramatically over the past two years (by 12.8% and 16.8% respectively).

I firmly believe this data clearly demonstrates the need for an additional Judge for the Brunswick Judicial Circuit. If further information would be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Jerry Keen
Majority Leader

Enclosures

Jk: mc



**BRUNSWICK JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
POPULATION BY COUNTY - 2000 CENSUS¹**

APPLING	17,419	10.37%
CAMDEN	43,664	26.01%
GLYNN	67,568	40.24%
JEFF DAVIS	12,684	7.56%
WAYNE	26,565	15.82%
TOTAL	167,900	100.00%

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census Quickfacts.

**CAMDEN AND GLYNN COUNTIES
PROJECTED 2020 POPULATION AND
PROJECTED STATEWIDE POPULATION GROWTH²**

	2000 POPULATION	2020 POPULATION	% GROWTH
CAMDEN	43,664	65,453	49.9%
GLYNN	67,568	92,121	36.3%
GEORGIA	8,186,453	10,843,753	32.5%

² Population Projections for the Ten County Coastal Region, Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development, Georgia Institute of Technology, September 2006 [County projections]; U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Interim Projections [State projection]

**BRUNSWICK JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
WORK LOAD INCREASE, 2005 - 2007**

	APPLING	CAMDEN	GLYNN	JEFF DAVIS	WAYNE
2005 CIVIL	561	1368	1867	494	729
2007 CIVIL ³	608	1790	2168	462	632
CIRCUIT CIVIL CASELOAD INCREASE 2005 - 2007	5019 to 5660 (12.8%)				
2005 CRIMINAL	135	531	878	158	391
2007 CRIMINAL ⁴	174	660	932	212	466
CIRCUIT CRIMINAL CASELOAD INCREASE 2005 - 2007	2093 TO 2444 (16.8%)				

³ Projected, based on doubling of case counts as of June 30, 2007.

⁴ Projected, based on doubling of case counts as of June 30, 2007.



House of Representatives

CECILY HILL
REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 180
379 MOECKEL PLACE
ST. MARYS, GEORGIA 31558
(912) 673-7373 (O)
(912) 673-7225 (H)
(912) 673-6337 (FAX)
E-MAIL: Cecily@Cecilyhill.com

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 501
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334
(404) 656-0177

STANDING
COMMITTEES:

GAME, FISH & PARKS - VICE CHAIR
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM
BANKS & BANKING
TRANSPORTATION

August 1, 2007

Mr. David Ratley, Director
Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street, S.W., Ste. 300
Atlanta, GA 30334-5900

Dear Mr. Ratley,

As I am sure you are aware the Brunswick Judicial Circuit is in dire need of an additional Judge. Population projections indicate that Camden and Glynn are expected to add population at a significantly greater rate than the state as a whole. These counties include about 2/3 of the population of the Brunswick Judicial Circuit. The increased workload of the circuit already reflects this trend. The civil and criminal caseload has increased dramatically over the years.

In the past, we have requested an additional Judge, but have now reached a desperate situation. In order to continue to carryout the judicial process, the addition of another judge is crucial.

I am asking that you please give the needs of the Brunswick Judicial Circuit careful consideration when making your decision on the judgeship request.

Respectfully,

Rep. Cecily A. Hill

**CAMDEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 5130
ST. MARYS, GA 31558
912-729-3635**



August 3, 2007

David L. Ratley, Director
Administrative Office of the Courts
Judicial Council of Georgia
244 Washington Street, S.W., Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30334-5900

Re: 5th Superior Court Judgeship Request for the Brunswick Judicial Circuit

Dear Mr. Ratley and Members of the Judicial Council:

In response to your letter dated July 20, 2007 I wanted to write to you today in support of the 5th Superior Court Judgeship for the Brunswick Judicial Circuit. The Camden County Bar Association has over 25 attorney members with varied practice areas. We uniquely understand the necessity for increased access to the courts. The population and case load for the Brunswick Judicial Circuit has grown to the point that we are in desperate need for a 5th Superior Court Judge. Our 4 current Superior Court Judges assisted by Senior Judges and Juvenile Judges work hard to meet the increasing demands of our judicial system, but they cannot do it alone. The Brunswick Judicial Circuit encompasses the five counties of Appling, Camden, Glynn, Jeff Davis, Wayne and stretches over 120 miles from Hazlehurst to St. Marys. This expansive circuit needs an additional Superior Court Judge.

Therefore, we respectfully request that you give priority to the creation of the 5th Superior Court Judgeship for the Brunswick Judicial Circuit so that our clients do not live out the adage of Justice Delayed is Justice Denied.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this request.

Sincerely yours,

Camden County Bar Association


By: Robert W. Guy, Jr.
Its: President



House of Representatives

ROGER LANE
REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 167
P.O. BOX 899 D
DARIEN, GEORGIA 31305
(912) 264-8296 (O)
(912) 437-3546 (H)
(912) 265-3757 (FAX)
E-MAIL: rogerlane@hotmail.com

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 404
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334
(404) 656-0109
(404) 651-8086 (FAX)

STANDING
COMMITTEES:

JUDICIARY - CIVIL
REAPPORTIONMENT, VICE-CHAIRMAN
NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT

August 6, 2007

Hon. David L. Ratley, Director
Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts
Suite 300, 244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334-5900



Re: *Fifth Superior Court Judgeship for the Brunswick Judicial Circuit*

Dear Mr. Ratley:

I am in receipt of your letter of July 16, 2007, in regards to the above-referenced matter. The Brunswick Judicial Circuit's carryover status for an additional Superior Court Judgeship indicates the Circuit's need for an additional Superior Court Judgeship based upon the Circuit's caseload and population.

Additionally, the Brunswick Judicial Circuit, composed of Appling, Jeff Davis, Wayne, Camden and Glynn County is experiencing a significant growth in population and some estimate the population to double within the next ten (10) years. These estimates are based upon the explosion of baby boomer retirees who wish to locate to the coastal areas.

The distance between the courthouses in the Brunswick Judicial Circuit is another factor which strains the Circuit's judicial resources. From Brunswick on the east coast to Baxley, the westernmost courthouse in the Circuit, is a distance of about 100 miles. This requires the current judges to spend a considerable amount of time traveling throughout the Circuit.

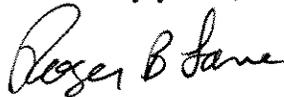
Another factor which adds to the workload of the current Superior Court judges is that one of the largest counties in the Circuit, Camden County, does not have a State Court and the Superior Court judges have to handle the caseload that would normally be handled by a State Court. Camden County also has a Drug/DUI Court which is very active and has produced some amazing results. It requires a considerable amount of time by the judges to conduct this Court.

Hon. David L. Ratley, Director
Judicial Council of Georgia
August 6, 2007
Page 2

Based upon the carryover status for a fifth judge for the Brunswick Judicial Circuit, combined with these additional factors which affect the current workload for the Superior Court judges, there is a great need for an additional judgeship for this Circuit and I request that the Judicial Council consider these additional factors in making their priority ranking recommendations for the General Assembly and the Governor.

If anything further is needed in these regards please feel free to call upon me and I appreciate the work which the Judicial Council and you do in these regards.

Sincerely yours,



ROGER B. LANE

RBL/jj

GLYNN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

HISTORIC GLYNN COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 701 "G" STREET, BRUNSWICK, GA 31520 912/554-7400 FAX 912/554-7596



August 8, 2007



Mr. David L. Ratley
Director
Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts
244 Washington Street, S. W., Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30334-5900

CARL JOHNSON, DISTRICT 1
ULRICH KELLER, DISTRICT 2
TONY THAW, DISTRICT 3
HOWARD LYNN, DISTRICT 4
JEROME CLARK, DISTRICT 5
DON HOGAN, AT-LARGE POST 1
CAP FENDIG, AT-LARGE POST 2

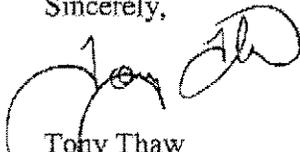
Dear Mr. Ratley:

This is in response to your letter of July 16, 2007, regarding the 5th judgeship for the Brunswick Judicial Circuit. I want to reiterate that everything that Judge James R. Tuten advised you earlier about the Court requirements in this circuit as well as the comments by last years' chairman of the County Commission, Mr. Don Hogan is still very much the state of the current situation.

The extra judgeship for this judicial circuit is a high priority for the Glynn County Commission. This fiscal year Glynn County will be bearing the cost of boarding out inmates to neighboring counties in the amount of \$600,000 - \$700,000. We feel strongly that a major contributing factor creating the need for this inmate boarding cost is the extended time it takes to prepare for and process cases in the courts. An added judgeship to this circuit would tremendously help alleviate the court backlog in the circuit. Any help you and the Judicial Council of Georgia can lend to this effort would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,


Tony Thaw
Chairman

TT:jc
Copy: Superior Court Judge James R. Tuten
Representative Jerry Keen

Alcovy Judicial Circuit

Alteration of Circuit Boundaries

MEMORANDUM

August 7, 2007

TO: Members of the Judicial Council

FROM: David L. Ratley

RE: Director's Report

Director's Office. In the coming weeks a Chief Budget Officer will be hired to assume responsibility for all AOC budget matters and serve as budget liaison to the Judicial Council, the Executive branch and the General Assembly. The Chief Budget Officer will report directly to me. The addition of this key position represents my intention to focus attention on streamlining and strengthening the current budgetary process as well as giving greater attention to management of expenditures over the course of the fiscal year.

Realignments. Mr. Vince Harris will continue as Associate Director for Operations and Support Services overseeing the Information Technology section as well as AOC facilities and property management. Mr. Randy Dennis, now an Associate Director, will continue as Chief Accounting Officer overseeing AOC accounting and payroll sections. Ms. Jane Martin will head a new AOC division focused on Children, Families and the Courts.

NCSC Studies. I am pleased to report that the AOC has contracted with the National Center for State Courts to conduct studies and develop recommendations in three areas: 1) AOC financial reporting processes internally and to constituent groups; 2) a staffing needs assessment of our trial courts that is based on current caseloads and population trends; 3) identify the concerns of the Georgia judiciary regarding future directions for the AOC. In the coming weeks I will keep you informed on the progress of these studies.

Professional Development. The Carl Vinson Institute of Government will provide professional development training for AOC mid-level managers. A three-day course, similar to the Institute's Executive Leadership Program, will be conducted in-house. The executive management team has already begun the leadership training program and will work toward completion of that program. The agency will also take advantage of customer service training and other training opportunities available through the State Personnel Administration.

We will continue to refine and improve AOC services to the Judicial Council and the Georgia Courts.

TAB 16

REPORT ON BUDGET MATTERS

MATERIALS WILL BE PRESENTED AS A HANDOUT AT THE MEETING

Board of Court Reporting Annual Report

The Board of Court Reporting of the Judicial Council of Georgia is the governing body that defines and regulates the practice of verbatim court reporting in the state. The Board ensures the proficiency and competency of reporters by creating and enforcing standards for court reporters, overseeing the certification process, and mandating continuing education requirements. In accordance with O.C.G.A. §15-14-27, the administrative operations are performed by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). The AOC provides staff to the Board for the primary responsibilities of administering certification exams, licensure of court reporters, registration of court reporting firms, compliance of mandated continuing education, and processing of grievances filed against court reporters. The Board encourages growth of the profession by promoting involvement in associations for the exchange of ideas and educational services.

Nine members comprise the Board of Court Reporting of the Judicial Council of Georgia: five certified court reporters, two attorney representatives from the State Bar of Georgia, one superior court judge, and one state court judge. The Judicial Council of Georgia ratifies the Board's rules and appoints members annually.

Board of Court Reporting 2006 Activities

Meetings Held. The **Board of Court Reporting** held four meetings last year. The Board also held two testing retreats, creating the written and dictation portions of the two exams that were administered during the year. **The Court Reporters' Training Council**, created by the Board for the purpose of developing and implementing procedures and standards for mandated continuing education, met in the Spring and Fall of 2006. The **Georgia Certified Court Reporters Association** (GCCRA), an organization created by the Board to improve the court reporting profession, provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and to further the education of its members. GCCRA published four quarterly newsletters, "On the Record", held a fall continuing education seminar, and held their annual business meeting.

Complaints. The Board of Court Reporting received twenty-one (21) grievances and held four (4) formal hearings. The Office of the Attorney General represented the Board at a hearing resulting from a Board-initiated grievance.

Appeals. The Superior Court of Fulton County affirmed a 2005 Final Order of the Board, regarding a court reporter's misconduct and violation of the Board's rules and regulations, on June 23, 2006. The Court of Appeals issued an order denying the application for Discretionary Appeal on August 18, 2006.

Certifications. Court reporters are certified by testing or reciprocity. Last year, thirty-one percent of the test applicants successfully passed the certification exam. The Board administered two exams, with the help of AOC Staff. The Board offered a "Tips for the Test Seminar" prior to each test for applicants to learn what to expect on the test, and how to best prepare for it. Twenty-four applicants were also approved for certification by reciprocity. The state of Georgia has 1132 active court reporters and 128 registered court reporting firms.

Board Goals and Accomplishments. The Board published a newly revised Continuing Education Manual, with the assistance of the Court Reporters Training Council, reflecting rule changes to the mandated training requirements. Effective November 2006, court reporters may track their continuing education credits online through the Institute of Judicial Education (ICJE). In an effort to streamline the Formal Grievance procedures, the Board created new forms requiring additional information from individual(s) filing complaints. The Board implemented changes in testing, requiring individuals to pass the written portion of the exam with 80% accuracy. Passing the written portion of the exam is now a prerequisite to the dictation skills test. The Board, with the help of AOC Staff, organized and implemented two seminars for newly certified court reporters, as required by Board rules.

Board Initiatives for FY 2008. The Board has set the following performance initiatives for FY2008:

- The overall objective of the Certification Committee of the Board is to increase the percentage of court reporters certified by testing. Additionally, the Committee will study the trend of increased applications for certification by reciprocity and its impact on the profession. The Committee will work on protocols for administering the test, as well as for grading the test.
- The Rules Committee is set to conduct a biennial audit of the Board's rules and bylaws for conformity with Georgia laws and statutes. The Rules Committee will also make an effort to ensure that the Rules are clear and concise. The general intent is for court

reporters to maintain certification without risking suspension or revocation for failure to comply with the rules and standards of practice of the profession.

- The Board offers court reporters the option of online application for, and renewal of certification. Studies show other regulatory and professional licensing boards experience a success rate of 90-95% of individuals adhering to an established or statutory deadline. In an effort to improve the renewal rate by the statutory deadline of April 1, the Board will intermittently provide official notices encouraging the use of online renewal. The goal is to have an 85% renewal rate of certified reporters by April 1, 2008. Additionally, the Board seeks to offer online license renewals for registered court reporting firms, a first for registered firm owners.
- The Board strives for superior customer service by providing innovative methods to respond to its external and internal customers. One method of fostering a high level of quality service is by automating routine processes of the Board. The automation process will be accomplished in part by enhancing the website from an informational portal to a more interactive portal. Customers will have immediate access to a calendar of events, current rules and bylaws of the Board, a list of noncompliant reporters, a fee schedule and compensation chart, the ability to register for upcoming training seminars, and license renewals. This will increase efficiency in the standard operating practices.
- The Board will publish its own informational newsletter twice a year, in a continued effort to keep certified court reporters in Georgia informed of Board activities, Board Rules, and those reporters who are suspended or revoked. The first issue is scheduled to be published in Summer, 2007.
- The Board will continue to organize and implement, with the help of AOC Staff, the LEAP Seminar for newly certified reporters, offering the Seminar twice each year. The Board plans to move toward offering the seminar once each year, beginning in 2008.
- The Board and AOC Staff will continue to administer the Georgia Certified Court Reporting Exam, offering the Exam twice each year, in the Spring and Fall. The Board will hold Testing Retreats for the purpose of creating the exam and to discuss testing and grading procedures. The hired Testing Facilitator and invited certified court reporters from across the state will participate in the Testing Retreats. The Board will also continue to hire the Testing Facilitator to conduct a “Tips for the Test Seminar” prior to each exam.

TAB 18

REPORT FROM GEORGIA COURTS AUTOMATION COMMISSION

MATERIALS WILL BE PRESENTED AS A HANDOUT AT THE MEETING

A RESOLUTION OF COMMENDATION

Commending Mr. Skip Chesshire, Superior Court Administrator, Cobb Judicial Circuit:

WHEREAS, Skip Chesshire has served Cobb County as Superior Court Administrator for the past 20 years and his reputation as a leader and innovator in court administration has earned him the respect of colleagues nation-wide; and

WHEREAS, Skip Chesshire served as the driving force behind the creation of the Georgia Council of Court Administrators and as that organization's founding president; and

WHEREAS, Skip Chesshire has more recently served as president of the National Association of Court Management from July 2006 to July 2007, and by virtue of that position, is also serving a three-year term on the board of directors of the National Center of State Courts; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Court Management is an international organization with more than 3,000 members, including court administrators from Africa, Australia, and other nations; and

WHEREAS, the National Center of State Courts board consists of 21 members, including six state Supreme Court Chief Justices, and provides judicial guidance and information to the U.S. Congress; and

WHEREAS, Skip Chesshire's insight, abilities, vision, and commitment to excellence in the performance of his duties has earned well deserved professional recognition for himself and has similarly brought honor and prestige to the Superior Court of Cobb County and the Judicial Branch of Georgia.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF GEORGIA that this body does hereby commend and congratulate Skip Chesshire on being recognized nation-wide for his outstanding abilities and express our deepest gratitude for his service to the Judicial Branch of the State of Georgia, to Cobb County, and all of the citizens of this State.

Presented this 28th day of August, 2007

Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears
Chair, Judicial Council of Georgia