



HURST+BROOKS+ESPINOSA

March 16, 2017

The Honorable Jose Medina
Member of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 2141
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 414 (Medina) - Suspension and allocation of vacant judgeships
As amended March 6, 2017 – SUPPORT
Set for hearing March 21, 2017 – Assembly Judiciary Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Medina:

On behalf of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, I write in support of AB 414, your measure that would suspend five vacant superior court judgeships in jurisdictions with more judicial positions than their assessed need warrants and reallocate those positions to high-caseload jurisdictions. Further, AB 414 specifies that the determination of judicial need be performed in accordance with a methodology approved by the Judicial Council. This measure is awaiting hearing before the Assembly Judiciary Committee.

As you are aware, the Judicial Council, in its biennial Judicial Needs Assessment most recently published in Fall 2016, identifies overall statewide judicial officer needs and then prioritizes placement of those positions on the basis of workload across 31 courts. The 2016 assessment identifies a need for 188.5 additional judicial officers to meet statewide workload and caseload demands. Further, the assessment compares each local court's assessed judicial need against its authorized judicial positions. Riverside County, regrettably, stands above all others in terms of overall need – the superior court's workload warrants an additional 46.8 judicial officers (a figure that is 62 percent greater than the level of judicial positions presently authorized). Steep population growth in Riverside County over the last several decades has greatly outpaced the trial court's ability to keep up with the attendant demand on judicial resources.

The County of Riverside greatly appreciates your effort to address the issue of judicial resources in the Inland Empire. AB 414 recognizes the imbalance in the current distribution of judicial resources across the state and seeks to reassign vacancies to high-caseload jurisdictions. We understand the policy interest in more rationally distributing existing judicial positions as a first step in addressing the critical need for additional resources statewide. The application of the provisions of AB 414 would likely result in additional resources for the superior court in Riverside County. The measure would improve our mutual constituents' access to justice and assist our county criminal justice partners in carrying out their critical functions and fulfilling core county responsibilities related to matters before the court.

For these reasons, Riverside County is pleased to support AB 414. If you have any questions about the County's position, please do not hesitate to contact Deputy County Executive Officer, Brian Nestande at (951) 955-1110 or bnestande@rceo.org.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Espinosa

cc: The Honorable Mark Stone, Chair, Assembly Judiciary Committee
The Honorable Jordan Cunningham, Vice Chair, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Members and Counsel, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Members, Riverside County Delegation