

Minutes
Conference Call, August 2, 2006, 7:30 a.m.
Board of Judicial Policy and Administration

The Board of Judicial Policy and Administration met by conference call on August 2, 2006. Chief Justice Barton Voigt, Justice Jim Burke, Judge Jeff Donnell, Judge John Perry, Judge Victoria Schofield, and Judge Bob Skar attended. Holly Hansen and Ronda Munger also attended.

The Board's conference call was prompted by the short timeframe of the upcoming Joint Judiciary meeting. The Board was presented two proposals that needed immediate attention. The first proposal was a Family Responsibility Program developed by Roger McDaniel and District Judge Ed Grant. Judge Perry and Judge Donnell informed the Board that the District Judges Conference had discussed this proposal at their last meeting and a consensus about the program was not reached. The Board discussed several aspects of the program, such as the proposed hearing examiner (to be an employee of the Executive branch) and the separation of powers issue that creates between the Judicial and Executive Branches. Judge Donnell moved and Judge Perry seconded a motion for the Board to provide no response to the program. The motion carried unanimously.

The second item that was presented for immediate discussion was a Court Security Task Force report that was to be presented to the Joint Judiciary. Judge Donnell presented the highlights of the report. The task force will be asking for funds to establish three security pilot courts. At present time, the counties are responsible for providing court security and that burden is becoming ominous. The funds will cover one-time expenditures for equipment and architectural design features, as well as the expense of having county employees, mainly from the Sheriff's office, provide a security presence in the courtroom. Judge Perry moved and Judge Skar seconded a motion to adopt the report of the Court Security Task Force and submit it to the Joint Judiciary.

Holly Hansen made a brief report to the Board regarding the work of the Retirement Committee. She reported that there will be two retirement bills in the upcoming Legislative session. One bill will change how the Judicial Branch pays retired judges, and the second bill will address the problems in the current judicial retirement plan. The retirement committee will report to the Joint Judiciary at their August 24th and 25th meeting.

The final item that the Board discussed was a request from State Public Defender Ken Koski for the Board to support an increase in the wage that private counsel appointed to be public defender's get paid. The increase would be from a rate of \$60 and hour to \$100 per hour. This dollar amount is consistent with the rate that GALs are being paid across the state. Judge Donnell moved and Judge Skar seconded a motion to support the pay increase for contract public defenders. Motion carried unanimously.

Board Adjourned 8:30 a.m.