

RENO MUNICIPAL COURT  
JIM VAN WINKLE, JUDGE



RENO, NEVADA

June 20, 2007

**FILED**

Chief Justice A. William Maupin  
Nevada Supreme Court  
201 South Carson Street  
Carson City NC 89701-4702

JUN 21 2007

JANETTE M. BLOOM  
CLERK OF SUPREME COURT  
BY *[Signature]*  
DEPUTY CLERK

RE: Hearing on The Nevada Judicial Council  
and Regional Judicial Council

ADKT 297

Dear Chief Justice Maupin,

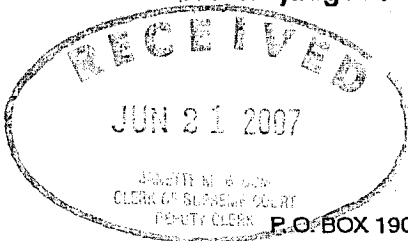
As a new member of the Judicial Council, I am sorry to say that I will not be able to attend the Hearing on June 21, 2007, because of interference from my judicial duties. However, I would like to briefly indicate to you that I feel the Nevada Judicial Council and the Regional Councils should be maintained and that they are fulfilling their purposes. In fact, with regard to the Washoe Council, we have recently had meetings under the able leadership of Judge Janet Berry wherein we have identified areas where the Washoe Regional Council can work to improve the judicial system.

With that said, I believe that the Nevada Judicial Council should be made a stronger organization. It should be an organization which actually governs the judiciary in the State of Nevada and not merely in a somewhat of an advisory role as it is now.

I think you only need to look at some of the surrounding states, for instance, California and Utah, to see how a strong judicial council governs and supervises a judicial system.

With regard to the judicial system, I believe that we in Nevada need to actually have a judicial system rather than the fragmented and feudal system that we presently have. We need to have uniform funding for all the courts, we need to have the courts unified and come under the jurisdiction of the judicial council. We can no longer afford, with a State that is growing as fast as this one is, to have a fragmented judicial system that was probably obsolete thirty or forty years ago.

We also need to seek to have passed a modified Missouri Plan so that judges in this State are appointed and then run for retention rather than the system that we have now where the judges run in contested elections, forcing them to raise great amounts of money.



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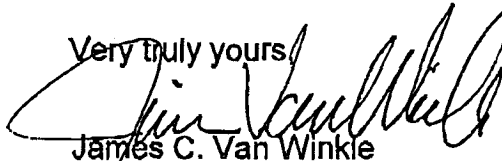
As I indicated earlier, I believe that the courts need to be unified. We need to have one judicial system instead of a myriad of courts, some under the jurisdiction of the state and some under the jurisdiction of the counties and some under the jurisdiction of the cities, so that we can have uniform funding, we can have adequate and uniform facilities and we can actually have a judicial system that is appropriate and responsive to the needs of a growing state population.

We need to, I feel, make one class of trial judges that would handle anything from a traffic ticket up to major civil cases or major felonies, or, at the very least, we need to combine the justice and the municipal courts so that we won't have two courts doing essentially the same thing.

I realize that some of these ideas and plans are not entirely within the purview of the Supreme Court, however, I believe that we as judges need to do what we can accomplish and thereafter look to the legislature and the voters to accomplish the rest.

I appreciate you giving me this opportunity to comment on these matters.

Very truly yours,



James C. Van Winkle  
Municipal Court Judge