

SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

WASHOE COUNTY
STATE OF NEVADA



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ORIGINAL

June 19, 2007

Chief Justice A. William Maupin
Supreme Court of Nevada
Supreme Court Building
201 South Carson Street, Suite 300
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4702

RE: ADKT 297

FILED

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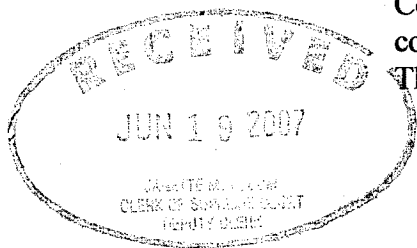
HEIDI BLOOM
CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT
BY *Heidi Bloom*
DEPUTY CLERK

Dear Chief Justice Maupin:

This letter is sent in response to the letter sent by Mr. Titus on June 8, 2007 and the Order Scheduling Public Hearing to Review the Operation of the Judicial Council of the State of Nevada dated June 1, 2007.

I will attempt to address each of the issues announced in the Order of June 1, 2007.

1. Whether the Nevada Judicial Council and the Regional Judicial Councils are fulfilling their intended purposes as described in Supreme Court Rules 8 and 9? I opine that the purposes for both the Nevada Judicial Council and Regional Judicial Councils, while established by rule, are not fully implemented. Certain functions are implemented, but not fully communicated throughout the State nor some of the regional areas. During several of the Judicial Council meetings, it was evident that participation in the Regional Judicial Councils was waning with the exception of the rural regions. In the rural regions, it appeared from the statements made by the participating judges, that the Regional Councils were having a positive impact as to providing greater communication pertaining to the several issues facing the rural courts. The Nevada Judicial Council has served a purpose in that it has been



recognized during the legislative cycle as to its position on various aspects of legislation. I opine the several committees within the Judicial Council bear review regarding the process of how they receive issues for which they ultimately provide minimum standards. I experienced the fact that certain of the committees sometimes lack in the assignments or prioritization of such issues. Perhaps this should have been a responsibility of the Judicial Council and assignments should have been made during each of the Council meetings. I don't believe there has been much impact in the areas of court facilities, court staffing and court technology. Court security is active, but there needs to be output that has an impact as to implementation. I opine that the several committees meet periodically, certain activities take place and recommendations are formulated for presentation to the Council as a whole. However, I believe communication is so diverse among the various committees, that there is no idea of who is working on which issue or what is being recommended to the Council. In certain cases, issues being worked by a committee are being worked locally at either the court or county level (e.g. court security, access to records, e-filing/document imaging) but communication does not take place between such committees and the regional agencies or courts and the end product produced by a Council committee may conflict with that of the local courts or counties. Communication appears to be lacking regarding dissemination to all of the judges as to the results of the Council and Regional meetings. Although the minutes may be shared, I doubt that they are reviewed with any level of concern. Ultimately, the purpose for the Judicial Council and the Regional Judicial Councils can be as effective as the leadership that drives them. Have there been improvements through the recommendations of the Councils? I would say that there has been progress, but more could be realized.

2. Whether the Nevada Judicial Council and Regional Judicial Councils remain viable organizations or have the Nevada District Judges' Association and the Nevada Judges' Association rendered the Council obsolete? Although I attended the Nevada District Judges' Association meetings in the past and I am aware of their influence during the legislative cycles, I don't know if their impact can be any greater than that of the Councils. I am certain they deal with similar issues presented to the Councils, but I have not heard what the results have been as to recommendations etc. I opine each of the Associations are more concerned with issues and interests concerning their constituency and concern regarding the global issues might not be relevant or of concern to them. If the Councils were rendered obsolete, then it would appear the Supreme Court would have to take over the leadership and linkage required to address the global issues impacting all of Nevada's courts. Another concern I would have is not knowing what influence court administration would have within two Associations which are

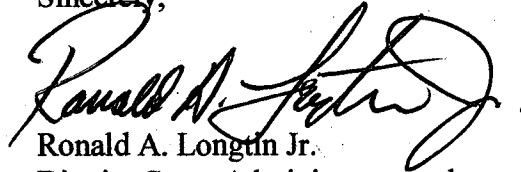
more concerned with service to their respective constituencies. Although I attended meetings with the Nevada District Judges' Association, it appeared to me that many of the meetings were developed with idea of judicial education in mind rather than resolution of existing issues. What role would court administration play regarding the Associations? Would we be invited to participate in such issues that impact court administration? The process would certainly have to be developed.

3. If the Nevada Judicial Council and/or the Regional Judicial Councils are to continue, what changes should be effectuated to redefine their purposes and responsibilities? The testimony for the ADKT should be taken into account. I am certain there will suggested changes. Additionally, feedback from Council membership should be obtained as to changes. I believe there should be a centralized system of prioritization and assignment of issues to the Council committees. Perhaps this might come from the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court. Additionally, there needs to be a frequent processing of monitoring how each committee is doing regarding their meeting and productivity in addressing the issues. We need to start having success in even a few of the statewide issues to motivate the Councils.

4. If the Nevada Judicial Council and/or the Regional Judicial Councils are to continue, what should the Administrative Office of the Courts' role be with respect to the Nevada Judicial Council and the Regional Judicial Councils? One suggestion I would have would be the establishment of a tickler system regarding meetings, issues, and productivity of the various committees. Another should be the evaluation of an effective means of communication with the entire State's Judiciary to report out the results of the various Council and committee meetings. Perhaps blending the minutes with the statewide judicial news might help. This would also help in getting the results of Council work out to other government agencies. I really don't think many of our government agencies know about the existence of the Councils. There needs to be continuous publicity to talk about the purpose and successful achievements of the Councils and their committees. Keep the information short and highlight the critical issues. The Administrative Office of the Courts should continue to provide the primary administrative support for the Councils per the current Rule. If the Administrative Office of the Courts monitors the activity of the Council under the direction of the Chief Justice and Supreme Court, then there should be a periodic review by the AOC and the Chief Justice regarding the assignment of issues to committees, problems within the committees, productivity or lack thereof and communication regarding issues.

I appreciated the opportunity to contribute to this ADKT. Ultimately, the Councils and their committees can only be as responsive and fulfill their purposes as we want them to. Effective, driving leadership will do much to encourage greater productivity.

Sincerely,



Ronald A. Longtin Jr.
District Court Administrator and
Clerk of the Court

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Cc: Chief Judge Polaha
Judge Janet Berry
Ron Titus