

NEBRASKA SUPREME COURT

STEPHANIE F. STACY
JUDGE



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December 17, 2018

Senator Jim Scheer
Speaker of the Nebraska State Legislature
State Capitol Bldg., Rm. 2103
Lincoln, NE 68509

The Honorable Pete Ricketts
Governor of the State of Nebraska
Lincoln, NE 68509

The Honorable Chief Justice Michael Heavican
State Capitol
Lincoln, NE 68509

Re: Report of Judicial Resources Commission annual public hearing

Dear Speaker Scheer, Governor Ricketts, and Chief Justice Heavican:

Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 24-1205 (Reissue 2016), the Judicial Resources Commission held its annual public hearing on December 11, 2018, to determine (1) whether any new judgeship is appropriate in any judicial district or a reduction of judgeships is appropriate in any judicial district, (2) whether the judicial district boundaries or the number of judicial districts should be changed for the district or county courts, and (3) to examine the current caseload statistics and make any appropriate recommendations for the more balanced use of existing judicial resources. Advance notice of the time, place and agenda for the annual public hearing was publicized on November 14, 2018 and amended on December 4, 2018. This letter will serve as the Commission's report on the 2018 annual public hearing.

The Commission examined the current caseload and weighted caseload reports for the district, county, and separate juvenile courts. In addition to these reports the Commission Chair requested, and the State Court Administrator's office provided, supplemental information for the Commission's consideration regarding: 1) trends in caseloads and weighted caseloads, 2) the current distribution of judicial resources; 3) population trends; 4) judicial retirement forecasts; 5) language interpreter trends; 5) problem solving court expansion; 6) the judicial time studies from 1995 and 2005 on which the weighted caseload reports rely; and 7) the sufficiency of bandwidth in courthouses across the state. The Commission also considered written and oral testimony bearing on the current allocation of judicial resources and access to the courts.

After considering this information, the Judicial Resources Commission voted unanimously to:

- 1) Again recommend the creation of a new district court judgeship position in the 4th Judicial District; and
- 2) Fully support the judiciary's budget request for \$250,000 to conduct a new statewide judicial time study, so more accurate weighted caseload statistics can be compiled for the Commission's consideration.

The Commission made no other recommendations with regard to judgeships, judicial districts, or existing judicial resources.

Sincerely,



Stephanie F. Stacy
Chair, Judicial Resources Commission

SFS/dm

pc Judges of the Nebraska Supreme Court
Corey R. Steel, State Court Administrator
Wendy Wussow, Clerk, Nebraska Supreme Court
Members of the Judicial Resources Commission