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Contact: Philip R. Carrizosa, 865-8044

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## **Court Leaders Respond to CCMS Audit**

**SAN FRANCISCO**—The Judicial Council agrees with most of the recommendations made in an audit of the California Court Case Management System (CCMS) by the Bureau of State Audits (BSA) that was released today.

“The Judicial Council is largely in agreement with the BSA’s recommendations and in many instances has already adopted practices and policies consistent with the recommendations made,” said William C. Vickrey, Administrative Director of the Courts. “We very much appreciate the thorough nature of the audit and the obvious care with which the report was written.

“Most of the findings in the report refer to past practices in the oversight of the project,” Vickrey continued. “We have already fulfilled a number of key recommendations: We have increased Judicial Council oversight of the project; expanded the participation of justices, judges, court administrators, attorneys, and justice partners; and created a project management office. We are also very close to completing an independent cost-benefit analysis.”

In legislative budget hearings last year the Judicial Council agreed to scale back the CCMS deployment in light of the state’s current fiscal climate. It will be deployed to only three courts during the next two years. “We remain committed to this deployment approach, which recognizes the state’s fiscal challenges and the need to move deployment forward,” said Vickrey.

“Now we have to focus on the implementation of a system that will bring the California courts into the 21st century,” said Justice Terence L. Bruiniers, chair of the Judicial Council’s CCMS Executive Committee. “The system development will be completed in three months with final testing completed in July. Deployment is already beginning in the three early adopter courts. Eventually courts throughout the state will have access to all pertinent information involving the cases that come before them, increasing both efficiency and public safety.

“When the project is deployed throughout the state,” he said, “Californians will be able to file documents without visiting a courthouse, justice systems will be updated instantly whenever there is new information, and our various jurisdictions will be able to seamlessly communicate with each other electronically, increasing the efficiency of our state’s justice system.”

Bruiniers, an associate justice of the Court of Appeal, First Appellate District also pointed out that the revamped governance structure that includes judges and justices will oversee the project to ensure that the system will deliver what California courts and citizens need. He stated, “One area of concern expressed in the audit was a lack of trial court buy-in. That situation is now being addressed.”

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Vickrey added that the audit covers more than eight years and the CCMS project has evolved significantly since then. “The scope of the project expanded in that time to include court justice partners, such as law enforcement agencies, child support services, and others,” he said. “That required some rework, but the main thing is that we are moving forward now and that many lessons were learned that we can apply to the successful implementation of CCMS.”

Both Vickrey and Bruiniers emphasized that the need for CCMS did not come into question at any point in the audit report. “There seems to be little question that we’re on the right path,” Bruiniers said. “I think it’s important to emphasize that the audit does not recommend ending the project. We need to move on.”

Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye has endorsed the implementation and benefits of CCMS. “When I am asked why we continue to invest in CCMS even in the face of budget reductions, my response is that I cannot think of a better investment in the future of our courts, or for that matter our courts here and now,” she said in a speech last week.

Vickrey said that CCMS is on track for beginning the initial deployment this year. “With the recommendations of the State Auditor and the ongoing assistance of the California Technology Agency, we are prepared to begin the deployment of CCMS in our three early adopter courts,” he said. Thus far, the judicial branch has invested \$332 million in project development. The total project cost to deploy the system statewide over a 15-year period will not exceed \$1.3 billion.

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