



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CALIFORNIA

July 20, 2012

Judicial Council of California  
Attn: Invitations to Comment  
455 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Response to Invitation to Comment  
Item SP 12-05

To the Judicial Council:

The League of Women Voters of California would like to comment on the Strategic Evaluation Committee (SEC) report on the Administrative Office of the Courts.

The League appreciates the hard work that went into this report, which is directed toward the laudable goal of improving the manner in which the AOC provides services to the courts and the public.

As the Council considers the SEC report, we urge you to keep in mind the important work the Administrative Office of the Courts does to improve and maintain access to justice for all Californians and look beyond mere cost-cutting and administrative efficiencies. The AOC plays a vital role in developing and supporting programs relating to access to justice, including self-help centers for self-represented litigants, family law facilitators, collaborative courts, the AOC's self-help website, and more. Since such programs significantly impact language access; representation in family law, juvenile dependency, and domestic violence matters; and access and assistance for self-represented litigants, they are critical to protecting the rights of some of the most vulnerable residents of our state.

The League of Women Voters of California supports measures that enable the judicial system of the state to provide adequate access to legal services for all. Over the years, League representatives have served on committees and commissions that have relied upon the AOC's work in advancing access to justice, including the Judicial Council's Advisory Committee on Access and Fairness, the Impartial Courts Commission, and the State Bar's Access to Justice Commission. We thus have had firsthand knowledge of the vital role the AOC and its staff have played in fulfilling the Judicial Council's strategic goal of providing equal access to the courts for all Californians.

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We ask the Council to carefully take into account the potential impact on the public as you consider the SEC recommendations and their possible implementation. We hope that you recognize the importance of the AOC's work on access to justice issues throughout the state and bear in mind more than the simple issues of cost-cutting and administrative efficiency. The value of work that supports access to justice is not always susceptible to a simple cost-benefit analysis. The work of the AOC in this area not only supports the judicial branch, but also affects access to the courts, procedural fairness in the judicial system, and, ultimately, the public's trust and confidence in the judiciary.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the SEC report.

Sincerely,



President