

CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES

Resolution 4

In Support of Promoting a Culture of Transparency and Accountability through Court System Performance Measures

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices (the Conference) understands the relationship between judicial independence and accountability and recognizes that accountability and transparency are critical to judicial governance and to the preservation and strengthening of an independent judiciary; and

WHEREAS, the Conference has repeatedly expressed its strong commitment to the pursuit of accountability and transparency in the conduct of state and local courts and in overall judicial branch operations; and

WHEREAS, state court leaders have a duty to ensure their organizations are accountable to the public and their inter-branch partners, which can be accomplished in part by instituting a set of empirical measures and a program of ongoing assessment of court outcomes with wide publication of the assessment results; and

WHEREAS, court performance measurement is the evaluation of overall systems and programs, rather than individual judicial performance, and encompasses both a quantitative and qualitative assessment of court effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, the assessment of court performance serves as a basis for organizational change and for continuous improvement of court operations and programs; and

WHEREAS, it is important that state court leaders share outcome data in a public manner by publishing the results of their performance measurements so the public can evaluate the effectiveness of state court systems; and

WHEREAS, state court systems are working successfully in many different contexts to advance accountability and transparency, yet court performance measurement requires increased emphasis; and

WHEREAS, the Conference of State Court Administrators prepared a white paper entitled *Promoting a Culture of Transparency and Accountability: Court System Performance Measures*, which examined available performance measurement tools, best practices, and lessons learned; and

WHEREAS, to create and sustain a court culture of accountability and transparency, the Conference of State Court Administrators urged:

- Chief justices and state court administrators to assume a leadership role, regardless of their court system organizational structure, to promote and implement performance measurement systems; and
- State courts to develop the automated capacity to collect, report, and analyze the data necessary to support improved management; and
- State courts to adopt policies requiring performance measurement; and
- State courts to measure their courts' performance and share the measurement data on their courts' websites, in annual reports, at budget hearings, and at other public meetings to improve understanding of the judicial branch; and
- State courts to use their performance results to educate the legislative and executive branches of government; and
- State courts to share their information, methodologies, and results with one another and with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) in an effort to learn from these shared experiences and improve performance and management; and
- NCSC to serve as the clearinghouse for state performance measures and management solutions provided by the states and to develop an implementation manual to assist state courts with performance measurement; and
- NCSC and the National Association for Court Management to emphasize the use of performance measures and the importance of publicizing data in educational programs for future court leaders;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference endorses the Conference of State Court Administrators' white paper entitled *Promoting a Culture of Transparency and Accountability: Court System Performance Measures* and the recommendations contained in it.

Adopted as proposed by the CCJ Board of Directors at the CCJ/COSCA Annual Meeting in August 2009.