

E-SJI NEWS

Status of FY 2014 Appropriations



On July 20, 2013, the House Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations Subcommittee marked up the FY 2014 CJS Bill, which included \$4,799,000 for SJI. The full House Appropriations Committee approved the Bill on July 17th. On July 16th, the Senate CJS Appropriations Subcommittee marked up the Bill, including the requested \$5,121,000. The full Senate Appropriations Committee approved the Bill on July 18th. SJI greatly appreciates the support from the House and Senate CJS Subcommittees and their staff. SJI will continue to provide updates on the FY 2014 Appropriations Process in future editions of the E-SJI News.

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Executive Session for State Court Leaders Releases New Papers



The [Executive Session for State Court Leaders in the 21st Century](#) has released two new papers in the series.

Executive Session participants, in coordination with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) have been publishing an ongoing series of papers that explore, through in-depth analysis, a policy or operational issue critical to effective state court leadership.

The latest papers, [Governance: The Final Frontier](#), by NCSC President Mary McQueen, and, [Maintaining Institutional Independence: Funding Sustainable State Courts During Economic Crisis](#), by former Oregon Chief Justice Paul De Muniz are now available. These two new papers, in addition to the full catalog, are available [online](#).

Washington Concludes Analysis of Limited Jurisdiction Courts

In FY 2012, the Washington Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) was awarded an SJI grant (SJI-12-T-076) to analyze the efficiency and effectiveness of courts of limited jurisdiction throughout the state.

Washington, like Ohio, Arizona, and Texas, has a robust limited jurisdiction court system. In Washington, these courts are comprised of both district and municipal systems and appear in each of Washington's 39 counties and most major cities and towns. The courts receive primarily local funding in addition to other limited resources. These courts are authorized to hear misdemeanor criminal cases; traffic, non-traffic, and parking infractions; and issue domestic violence protection orders. District courts also have the authority to hear civil actions of \$75,000 or less and small claims up to \$5,000.

In consideration of streamlining operations through reform, the AOC required this analysis to explore the benefits of a regional court model capable of accomplishing some of the

following outcomes developed by a statewide Courts of Limited Jurisdiction Work Group (CLJWG):

- Minimizing the abundance of complex court organizations focused primarily on local concerns without a foundation of sound management practices and efficient resource allocation.
- Reducing the inequitable distribution of resources among courts of varying jurisdictions.
- Diffusing authorities and power, and minimal management accountability, with attendant lack of uniform case processing and court operational practices.
- Decreasing local variations in the processes, procedures and quality of justice.
- Expanding management capacity and authority, thereby reducing their vulnerability to micromanagement by other branches of government.

The final report highlights critical administrative, budgetary, and policy considerations that must be considered in a regional consolidation plan.

In addition to focusing on the history, successes, and challenges of state court consolidation, the report also presents several models for municipal court operations that were considered in both cost and caseload benefits analysis. Customer access, responsiveness, and satisfaction, as well as human resources and collaboration are evaluated in each of the five possible municipal court models.

A variety of recommendations presented to the AOC and its stakeholders are cited in-depth in the final report.

To review this [report](#) and other papers addressing limited jurisdiction court issues from SJI grantees, please visit the [NCSC Library eCollection](#).



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Douglas County, Nebraska Juvenile Court Develops Comprehensive Business Processes

In FY 2011, the Separate Juvenile Court of Douglas County, Nebraska obtained SJI assistance to refine its business practices to achieve greater efficiencies (SJI-11-T-007).

The detailed assistance provided by the NCSC compared the new JUSTICE case management system to the Court's previous criminal justice information system (CJIS). Analysis of the modules that the Court and their partners had access to determined that availability of information was consistent but needed to be utilized differently. The recommendation to establish baseline practices will help the jurisdiction monitor dependency caseloads and pull the required data for national dependency and juvenile justice cases. As a Model Court in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) Courts Catalyzing Change project, the ability to access this data through the JUSTICE case management sys-



using diversion programs to reduce filings from the number of cases referred. This translated to valuable recommendations pertaining to caseloads, calendaring, and specific types of court actions, including petitions, motions, hearings, and supervision. Additional recommendations advised that

tem and a specific collections process was considered essential.

Further review of dependency and delinquency case filings revealed that Douglas County was experiencing more serious cases than its peer counties, which had a higher proportion of lower level cases. The data also suggests that Douglas County was doing a better job of

strategic planning may be useful for aligning human resources with the greatest areas of need by caseload, including judicial, administrative, and probation staff.

To review this [report](#) and other SJI-supported projects addressing data process improvement, please visit the [NCSC Library eCollection](#).

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The State Justice Institute is a federally-funded, non-profit corporation established by federal law in 1984 to improve the quality of justice in the state courts.

