



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

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April 14, 2022

Hon. Christopher Ward
Assembly Member, 78th District
1021 O Street, Ste 4220
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: Assembly Bill 1972 (Ward) as amended March 17, 2022– Neutral if Amended

Dear Assembly Member Ward:

The Judicial Council is neutral, if amended, on AB 1972 which, among other things, requires the list of grand jurors selected by the court to contain each person's name, gender, age, race or ethnicity, and residential ZIP Code or supervisorial district of the respective counties. The bill also requires a list of certified names of impaneled persons containing each person's gender, age, race or ethnicity, and residential ZIP Code or supervisorial district to be published on an internet website and would require that version of the list to not contain the person's name. Courts will also be required to annually, beginning on or before March 15, 2024 and each year thereafter, provide the Judicial Council with aggregate data on the gender, age, and race or ethnicity of persons impaneled on a grand jury in the county, along with the lists of grand jurors selected, recommended, and impaneled and the name, gender, age, race or ethnicity, and residential ZIP Code or supervisorial district of the person. Additionally, the measure requires the Judicial Council to, beginning on or before June 15, 2024 and each year thereafter, report that information to the Legislature. Finally, the bill requires summons for prospective jurors sent by courts to include information on how to become a juror on a grand jury.

The Judicial Council is concerned with the portions of the bill that require trial courts to release grand juror information that includes the individual names along with specified demographic information. We note this requirement is not in line with current best practices related to information privacy. Further, the provisions of the bill that require courts to include additional information on how to become a member of their county grand jury on the courts existing trial juror summons and the reporting requirements may create significant fiscal impacts for the branch. We note this provision will have a wide range of fiscal impacts on printing and mailing costs, from those courts that are able to add the required language to their existing juror summons to courts that will be required to create a new larger summons to comply with the requirements of this bill. The council requests that the requirement for courts to report certain demographic information on grand jurors to

Hon. Christopher Ward

April 14, 2022

Page 2

the Judicial Council be amended to address the identified privacy issues. Finally, we request that the provisions of the bill requiring courts to provide additional information in their existing juror summons be converted to a voluntary option.

The Judicial Council notes that if AB 1972 is amended in this manner, it will reduce the council's fiscal estimate.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at 916-323-3121.

Sincerely,

Sent April 14, 2022

Mark Neuburger
Legislative Advocate

cc: Ms. Jessica Devencenzi, Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor
Mr. Martin Hoshino, Administrative Director, Judicial Council of California
Ms. Shelley Curran, Chief Policy & Research Officer, Judicial Council of California