

From: Taylor, Richele
To: Schimsa, RebeccaRebeccaSchimsa@gov.sc.gov
CC: Patel, SwatiSwatiPatel@gov.sc.gov
Date: 9/26/2016 5:06:23 PM
Subject: Re: DRAFT Brief for Chief Justices Meeting

My only question is on not being able to do the same thing we do with commissioners. I don't think we can look at their overall caseload like we do with the commissioners now, but couldn't they put some sort of deadline on date of hearing to orders? They couldn't add in requiring a written response if you don't make the deadline. What do you think ?

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Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 26, 2016, at 4:24 PM, Schimsa, Rebecca <RebeccaSchimsa@gov.sc.gov> wrote:

DRAFT – Please review for changes before I send it to Nicole.

BRIEF FOR CHIEF JUSTICES MEETING

Date: Tuesday, September 27, 2015

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Location: Governor's Office

Attending: Chief Justice Costa Pleicones and Chief Justice-elect Donald Beatty

Staff: Swati Patel, Richele Taylor, Rebecca Schimsa

Background: Our office requested this meeting to discuss how we could partner with the Chief Justices on agenda items for next year.

Fact Sheet – Workers' Comp & Judiciary

Workers' Comp Facts:

- In March, we asked the Commissioners choose a reasonable time for deciding cases, because the backlogs were high and we were receiving complaints—they agreed to 90 days from the hearing to issuing the order.
- Looking back over a 15 month period, we learned that there were 244 cases pending longer than 90 days.
- Since then (March), only five cases have gone longer than 90 days in the past five months.

Judicial Department Facts:

- Actual Travel Expenses (mileage, meals, lodging):

- 2014 - \$3 million.
- 2015 - \$3.2 million.
- 2016 - \$3.3 million.
- Budget Request FY 2015-16:
 - Judicial Salary Increase - \$5.5 million.
 - Additional Travel Costs - \$500,000.
- Assignment Schedule Sampling of September:
 - Judge Russo – Newberry; Marion; Florence; Chambers.
 - Judge Dennis – Horry; Richland; Berkeley; Chambers.
 - Judge McIntosh – Aiken area; Colleton; Oconee; Greenville area.

Talking Points – Top 3 Points

- I. As I work to finalize my agenda for next year, I would like to partner with you in making positive, good government changes to the court system that are similar to other reforms we've accomplished à For example: For Workers' Comp, we have begun to track how long it takes each Commissioner to issue an order from a hearing with a goal of issuing all orders within 90 days, which creates efficiency, consistency, and dependability.
- II. Looking at judges, it's impossible to create the same type of tracking system we did for Workers' comp, because judges do not own cases from start to finish and do not control their own dockets à Judges ride the circuit almost 3 weeks out of 4, and because they're moving around so often, they cannot be held accountable.
- III. I understand that the Constitution and statutes require that judges rotate on a "regular and continuous" basis, but decreasing the number of rotations would allow us to establish a judicial record and save taxpayer dollars in travel expenses à Last year, the public paid \$3.3 million mileage, meals, and lodging.

The Ask:

How can we work together to bring transparency, accountability, and efficiency to the judiciary to improve how cases are assigned and tracked? Using your powers as Chief Justice to issue orders to assign schedules (i.e. circuit rotation), what do you think you can do, and how can we work together?