

COURT OF APPEALS

MARGRET G. ROBB
CHIEF JUDGE



OF INDIANA

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September 18, 2012

TO: State Budget Agency
Adam M. Horst
Director

RE: Court of Appeals Transmittal Letter
2014 – 2015 Biennial Budget Request

The mission of the Court of Appeals of Indiana is: **To Serve All People By Providing Equal Justice Under Law.** The following objectives are sought to accomplish this mission:

1. To operate an independent, accessible, and responsive appellate judicial system for the just resolution of disputes.
2. To develop a stronger organization to meet the needs of the bench, bar, and public.
3. To enhance the understanding of the law, legal system and the administration of justice through judicial education.
4. To further the establishment of the Court's presence in Indiana communities.
5. To ensure the efficient use of public resources in the administration of the appellate justice system.

This Biennial Budget request is designed to enable the Court to achieve its objectives and to accomplish its mission. The Court has a national reputation for the quality and timeliness of its opinions and intends to keep it. In a period of reduced budgets and no increase in personnel, the Court continues to keep the average age of cases pending to one month. The increases requested in this budget will enable the Court to continue to provide the citizens of the State of Indiana an accessible, independent, and responsive appellate court that resolves conflicts fairly, efficiently, and timely.

The amount appropriated for Point 1 funds for FY 12 and FY 13 did not include the pay raises for Judges that were approved for July 1, 2011 (\$29,000 wages and \$3,000 fringe benefits) and July 1, 2012 (\$50,000 wages and \$5,000 fringe benefits) based on

Indiana Code 33-38-5-8.1 because the raises were approved after the biennial budget for FY 12/FY 13 was submitted and passed by the legislature. We have included in this budget a change package to our Point 1 fund for \$87,000 to cover this increase in Judges' pay and fringe benefits.

Because of the reduction to our budget over the last four years we have three positions that we could not fill. The Court continues to automate more of its processes to move cases quickly with no additional personnel and to prepare for a new case management system and electronic filing. Automation will ultimately save money by reducing the amount of paper used. The Court needs additional technical support to continue this process. We have included a change package that adds \$60,350 (Wage and fringe benefits) to our Point 1 funds that will give us the funds to fill one of our empty positions with a computer technician.

To replace the Court's aging technology equipment, including monitors, computers, and printers that are over five years old at this time, out of warranty, and beginning to fail, we have included a change package in the amount of \$100,000 for FY 15.

To have funds available to give performance awards in FY 14 and FY 15 at the rate of 2% we have included a change package in the amount of \$113,721 for FY 14 and an additional \$118,000 for FY 15.

The Court leases space in the PNC Center for six of our Judges, their staffs, and the Court's administrative staff. The annual rent for this space is based on a lease and will increase by \$7,100 for FY 14 and an additional \$7,100 for FY 15. These increases are included in this budget request as current services change packages.

Court personnel extensively use an electronic data base to conduct research. The court contracts for this service and the annual cost for FY 14 will increase by \$3,556 and for FY 15 the annual cost will increase by an additional \$3,750. These increases are included in this budget request as current services change packages.

In sum, this budget request provides the funds needed by the Court of Appeals to accomplish its mission in a timely and efficient manner. We believe it is reasonable and necessary.

Sincerely,


Margret G. Robb
Chief Judge