Dear Members and Others,

At yesterday's Judicial Council Meeting, CCMS Executive Committee Chairman Justice Terrence Bruiniers attempted to provide information concerning the total amount spent on CCMS. As we know from the State Auditor's 2011 report, this number is a moving target, and that was on full display in Justice Bruiniers' presentation. The Justice finally confirmed what the Alliance has been saying all along -- the project has consumed over a half-billion dollars to date. Judge David Rosenberg, chair of the Presiding Judges Advisory Committee, admitted that up until Bruiniers' report yesterday he had believed that the total expenditures had been in the $300 million dollar range. Reporter Maria Dinzeo has written an excellent piece detailing this issue, including verbatim quotes from yesterday's meeting, and we include the article for your information.

It appears that the Council is prepared to double down on CCMS, as evidenced by their new contract with tried-and-true Grant Thornton to provide justification for further expenditures on CCMS. We include a copy of that contract and amendments for your information, which discloses a total payment of $555,779.60 for the "cost benefit analysis" and the new report which the Council will consider in March. We also include an article dealing with that upcoming "analysis," and the fact that some courts have refused to even take part in another AOC sponsored "study" of the matter.

Among other news coming out of yesterday's meeting is the designation of Judicial Council members to serve as local court liaisons, although they generally have no connection with or particular knowledge of the courts to which they are assigned. The Alliance supports greater accountability and transparency in the operation of the Council and AOC, but we believe that democratization of the Council selection process is the vehicle that will bring this about, not another round of committees, task forces, liaisons, or planning sessions. The judges of this state clearly understand what the Council and AOC do, and judges know that what is needed is significant budgetary and governance reform. We include an article from the Daily Recorder's Legal Blog on this issue.

Again, thank you for your support. We continue to sign up new members and encourage you to ask your colleagues to join the Alliance.

Directors,
Alliance of California Judges