



SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

CHAMBERS OF
CHIEF JUSTICE THOMAS L. KILBRIDE

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Sept. 26, 2013

Toni Preckwinkle, President
Board of Commissioners of Cook County
118 N. Clark St.
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear Board President Preckwinkle:

As Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court, I acknowledge receipt of your September 12, 2013, letter, separately addressed to each member of our court and received by most of us on September 15, 2013. Our court subsequently reviewed your correspondence. First, you should know that throughout the past year our court has engaged in ongoing discussions on many of the questions raised in your letter. In fact, we were poised to convene a conference with national and regional experts on pretrial matters on October 1st and 2nd for a statewide audience of judges, probation workers, and others. The Hon. Eric T. Washington, Chief Judge, District of Columbia Court of Appeals, a national leader in the field of pretrial matters, had already committed to moderate the event.

Unforeseen circumstances have delayed the proposed conference date. In the interim, the Supreme Court will convene a primary stakeholders meeting of Cook County officials with the full court. We ask for your personal participation in a face-to-face meeting with our full court, Chief Judge Evans, State's Attorney Alvarez, Public Defender A. C. Cunningham, and Sheriff Dart.

We have asked Chief Judge Washington of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals to join us for the meeting and facilitate a discussion on criminal courts, specifically including pretrial release matters. Chief Judge Washington served as president of the national Conference of Chief Justices and is well respected in this area of court management. Biographical materials on him are enclosed.

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The details on location and a date will be worked out shortly with all parties. Given the questions posed in your letter to our court, it would be helpful for us to have specific background information from you before we convene. In particular, we ask that you provide defendant names, case docket numbers, and the source(s) of the data for the 300 defendants who "have been waiting at least *five* years for their cases to conclude." We also ask that you provide us with all factual details supporting the assertions in your letter.

We look forward to your personal participation in our planned meeting with the primary Cook County stakeholders. The purpose of convening a meeting of stakeholders is limited to one simple goal, namely, looking forward, how do we all play a role in improving the management of the criminal courts. We are hopeful that a frank discussion by the stakeholders in our presence will produce a positive, collaborative working relationship and develop concrete proposals.

Respectfully,



Thomas L. Kilbride

TLK:lc

c: Illinois Supreme Court Justices
Chief Judge Eric T. Washington, District of Columbia Court of Appeals
Chief Judge Timothy C. Evans, Circuit Court of Cook County
Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez
Cook County Public Defender A.C. Cunningham
Cook County Sheriff Thomas J. Dart
Director Michael J. Tardy, Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts