



**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**

Kim M. Bartleson, CCE
Court Executive Officer/Jury Commissioner

Gregory Elvine-Kreis
Presiding Judge

Kelly L. Neel
Assistant Presiding Judge

March 17, 2022

Measure Z Citizens' Advisory Committee

Dear Committee Members:

Re: Letter in Support of County Administrative Office Measure Z Application

I am writing in support of the County Administrative Office's (CAO) Measure Z application for an Administrative Analyst position that would manage the Humboldt County Court-Appointed Attorney Program (HCAAP).

The HCAAP (Program) provides a critical public safety service to the residents of Humboldt County and all law enforcement agencies. When the Public Defender and Conflict Counsel Offices declare conflicts, private defense attorneys must be appointed with investigative services and other related defense services required for court cases, and this program ensures a properly functioning criminal justice system. Additionally, this program was created to have a structure that controlled costs for the county by establishing contract attorney hourly rates.

The Humboldt County Superior Court has a full calendar daily with judges, staff, prosecutors, defendants, witnesses, family members and loved ones present. In addition, jurors are present as required for particular court cases. When a defendant is not provided with their constitutionally guaranteed defense, it affects the entire system, slowing down cases and ultimately impacting public safety. The HCAAP (Program) is designed to prevent such adverse effects, and the program requires dedicated staff at the county to properly administer the program.

The HCAAP (Program) must ensure that only qualified attorneys are representing clients; that the services they provide are competent; and that the attorneys and investigators they enlist the

services of are paid a fair wage. All of these factors require daily work, as attorneys are needed several times per week, sometimes with only a few hours' notice. Additionally, the Program requires annual maintenance to update program guidelines in order to keep pace with changing regulations, to recruit additional local attorneys, and to ensure private attorneys keep up with their continuing legal education, among other duties. With the current staffing in the County Administrative Office, these functions likely will not be adequately maintained, which threatens this critical service.

The HCAAP (Program) has proven to be a vital program the courts rely on to serve Humboldt County residents, and I am proud to support the County Administrative Office's Measure Z Application. I respectfully request that the Measure Z Citizens' Advisory Committee highly prioritize the Administrative Analyst Position in its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

Respectfully,



Kim M. Bartleson
Court Executive Officer
Humboldt Superior Court