



February 28, 2024

Honorable Senator Jonathan Dismang, Co-Chair
Honorable Representative Lane Jean, Co-Chair
Joint Budget Committee
One Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Senator Dismang and Representative Jean:

Upon Leadership’s request, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has been asked to detail recommended appropriation to the AOC as part of the Protect Arkansas Act (see A.C.A. § 16-10-143) and special language regarding county juror reimbursements. Therefore, the AOC respectfully requests the following in its 2024-2025 appropriation bill:

1. A new section and fund center to be titled “Specialty Courts.” Funding shall derive from the state central services fund with the following appropriation amounts in this section:
 - Professional Fees and Services – \$2,800,000. This appropriation will be used to enter into professional service contracts with qualified attorneys to serve as specialty court members and to represent special court participants.
 - Grants/Aid – \$1,700,000. This appropriation will be used for supportive and restorative services in specialty courts and as supplemental funding for the expansion or establishment of specialty court programs in circuit courts.
2. The following special language regarding county juror reimbursements authorized via Section 21 – County Juror Reimbursement:
 - SECTION SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS CODE NOR PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS SPECIAL, LOCAL AND TEMPORARY LAW. FUNDING AND APPROPRIATION TRANSFER AUTHORITY FOR COUNTY JUROR REIMBURSEMENT. (i) After receiving prior approval by the Arkansas Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee if meeting in a Legislative Session, the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts may direct the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State to transfer appropriation to the County Juror Reimbursement appropriation and State Central Services funding in the same amount to the County Juror Reimbursement Fund from any State Central Services Fund appropriation authorized for the Administrative Office of the Courts.
(ii) Determining the maximum amount of appropriation and funding for a state agency each fiscal year is the prerogative of the General Assembly. This is usually accomplished by delineating such maximums in the appropriation act(s) for a state agency and the general revenue allocations authorized for each fund and fund account by amendment to the Revenue Stabilization law. Further, the General Assembly has determined that the

Administrative Office of the Courts may operate more efficiently if some flexibility is provided to the Administrative Office of the Courts authorizing broad powers under this Section. Therefore, it is both necessary and appropriate that the General Assembly maintain oversight by requiring prior approval of the Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee, if meeting in a Legislative Session, as provided by this section. The requirement of approval by the Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee is not a severable part of this section. If the requirement of approval by the Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee is ruled unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, this entire section is void.

(iii) The provisions of this section shall be in effect only from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

The AOC also respectfully requests the following changes to its fiscal year 2024-2025 appropriation bill:

1. Eliminate AOC CIP Data Analyst in Section 15. In Section 1, adjust the number of AOC Data Quality Manager employees to two.
2. The following adjustments of appropriation for commitment items in Section 16 – Federal Court Improvement Program to the following amounts. The AOC is also asking for “court technology grants” to be retitled “dependency neglect grants.” **This is a reduction in total appropriation amount:**
 - Salary – \$64,600
 - Matching – \$21,534
 - Operating Expenses – \$350,000
 - Conference and Travel – \$150,000
 - Professional Fees and Services – \$30,000
 - Dependency Neglect Grants – \$140,000
3. A change in appropriation from \$544,627 to \$619,627 in operating expenses in Section 3 – Appropriation – Operations. Rising costs associated with inflation combined with additional responsibilities delegated to the agency in recent years necessitate a change in operating expenses appropriation.
4. Removal of Section 23 (fund center 99X/Stop Domestic Violence). This federally funded grant has expired.
5. A change in appropriation from \$250,000 to \$500,000 in security grants in Section 20 – Appropriation – Court Security Grants. The appropriation amount has not changed in the 15 years since its inception, and this change is necessary to ensure the security of courthouses. The entirety of this appropriation goes directly to counties across the state. Funding is from the state central services fund.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Marty Sullivan
cc: Bureau of Legislative Research

ARKANSAS SENATE
94th General Assembly - Fiscal Session, 2024
Amendment Form

DRAFT

Subtitle of Senate Bill No. 28

AN ACT FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS APPROPRIATION FOR THE 2024-2025
FISCAL YEAR.

Amendment No. ___ to Senate Bill No. 28

Amend Senate Bill No. 28 as originally introduced:

Page 1, line 34, delete "1" and substitute with "2"

AND

Page 2, line 22, delete "46" and substitute with "47"

AND

Page 3, line 9, delete "544,627" and substitute with "619,627"

AND

Page 3, line 16, delete "\$6,136,877" and substitute with "\$6,211,877"

AND

Page 9, delete line 17 in its entirety

AND

Page 9, line 18, delete "(2)" and substitute with "(1)"

AND

Page 9, line 19, delete "2" and substitute with "1"

AND

Page 9, line 30, delete "\$154,127" and substitute with "\$64,600"

AND

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Page 1 of 4

Page 9, line 31, delete "50,598" and substitute with "21,534"

AND

Page 9, line 34, delete "50,000" and substitute with "150,000"

AND

Page 9, line 35, delete "230,000" and substitute with "30,000"

AND

Page 10, line 2, delete "COURT TECHNOLOGY GRANTS" and substitute with "DEPENDENCY NEGLECT GRANTS"

AND

Page 10, line 2, delete "200,000" and substitute with "140,000"

AND

Page 10, line 3, delete "\$1,034,725" and substitute with "\$756,134"

AND

Page 11, line 28, delete "250,000" and substitute with "500,000"

AND

Page 11, line 29, delete "\$389,908" and substitute with "\$639,908"

AND

Page 12, delete SECTION 23 in its entirety

AND

Page 16, immediately following SECTION 32, insert a new SECTION to read as follows:

" SECTION 33. APPROPRIATION - SPECIALTY COURTS. There is hereby appropriated, to the Administrative Office of the Courts, to be payable from the State Central Services Fund, for operating expenses and grants for specialty courts of the Administrative Office of the Courts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025
(01) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	\$0

(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	0
(C) PROF. FEES	2,800,000
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0
(E) DATA PROC.	0
(02) GRANTS/AID	<u>1,700,000</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u><u>\$4,500,000"</u></u>

AND

Page 19, immediately following SECTION 36, insert a new SECTION to read as follows:

" SECTION 37. SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS CODE NOR PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS SPECIAL, LOCAL AND TEMPORARY LAW. FUNDING AND APPROPRIATION TRANSFER AUTHORITY FOR COUNTY JUROR REIMBURSEMENT. (i) After receiving prior approval by the Arkansas Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee if meeting in a Legislative Session, the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts may direct the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State to transfer appropriation to the County Juror Reimbursement appropriation and State Central Services funding in the same amount to the County Juror Reimbursement Fund from any State Central Services Fund appropriation authorized for the Administrative Office of the Courts. (ii) Determining the maximum amount of appropriation and funding for a state agency each fiscal year is the prerogative of the General Assembly. This is usually accomplished by delineating such maximums in the appropriation act(s) for a state agency and the general revenue allocations authorized for each fund and fund account by amendment to the Revenue Stabilization law. Further, the General Assembly has determined that the Administrative Office of the Courts may operate more efficiently if some flexibility is provided to the Administrative Office of the Courts authorizing broad powers under this Section. Therefore, it is both necessary and appropriate that the General Assembly maintain oversight by requiring prior approval of the Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee, if meeting in a Legislative Session, as provided by this section. The requirement of approval by the Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee is not a severable part of this section. If the requirement of approval by the Legislative Council or Joint Budget

Committee is ruled unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction,
this entire section is void.

(iii) The provisions of this section shall be in effect only from July 1,
2024 through June 30, 2025."

AND

Appropriately renumber all SECTIONS of the bill.

The Amendment was read the first time, rules suspended and read the second time and _____

By: Joint Budget Committee
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Secretary