

**MONDAY MORNING GROUP OF WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY
ANNUAL ADVOCACY TRIP – WASHINGTON, DC
APRIL 25 – 27, 2023**

**CRITICAL NEED FOR LARGER UNITED STATES DISTRICT
COURT FACILITY IN THE INLAND EMPIRE**

ISSUE: The Central District of California has the largest population of any Federal Judicial District in the United States, serving over 19 million people in seven counties. The Central District is comprised of three Divisions: Western (Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo Counties); Southern (Orange County) and Eastern (Riverside and San Bernardino Counties). While the Eastern Division is home to a quarter of the population of the Central District, it currently has only two of the 22 District Judges. The George E. Brown, Jr. District Courthouse in Riverside, which serves the entire Eastern Division (and thus, the entire Inland Empire), has only four courtrooms to serve 4.6 million people. The Eastern Division is one of the fastest growing regions in the nation, and its residents need sufficient judicial resources to provide them with the same access to justice enjoyed by the rest of the Central District.

ACTION: The Monday Morning Group supports the immediate implementation of the existing Long-Term Facilities Plan of the U.S. General Services Administration for the expansion of the Eastern Division Courthouse and the creation of new courtrooms and District Court facilities to accommodate additional federal judges.

BACKGROUND: Riverside and San Bernardino Counties are the 11th and 12th most populated counties in the nation, respectively, and the population is projected to increase 32% to 5.4 million inhabitants by 2030. Riverside County had the largest net migration gains of any of California's 58 counties last year, adding over 30,000 new residents, and was the second-highest population growth of any county in the nation. More than 40% of the nation's logistics traffic flows through the Inland Empire, which has more warehouse space than any other region in the country. Yet, despite this region's explosive growth, only two District Judges have been assigned to the Eastern Division since the District Courthouse opened in 2000, and for half of that time, a single District Judge has served the 4.6 million residents of the Eastern Division.

The lack of judicial resources in the Eastern Division stands in stark contrast to its neighbors. The Southern District of California has a District Judge for every 254,000 residents, the Central District's Southern Division has a District Judge for every 640,000 residents, and the Central District's Eastern Division has a District Judge for every 2.3 million residents — the highest ratio in the nation. The Eastern Division, with a population of 4.6 million residents, only has two authorized active District Judges, three Magistrate Judges, and only four total courtrooms.

Due to the lack of judges in the Eastern Division, two-thirds of all cases are transferred to either the Western or Southern Divisions, imposing a roadblock to justice for Riverside and San Bernardino County's residents. It is hard enough for someone in the Coachella Valley or the high desert to drive to Riverside for their federal cases. It is more than doubly hard for them to then travel to Los Angeles or Orange County, as the traffic is exponentially worse to commute to those areas. This reality deprives the residents of the Inland Empire, a majority of whom are from historically under-represented communities, of fair and adequate access to the Federal Justice System.

Moreover, the lack of District Judgeships has a more profound, if less recognized, impact on the Inland Empire. The entire federal law enforcement system is constructed around the number of District Judges in a division, as the Office of the United States Attorney provides staffing commensurate with the number of judges in any given division. Fewer judges prompt fewer federal prosecutors, which, in turn, results in fewer FBI and DEA agents. Accordingly, federal crimes are investigated and prosecuted less frequently in the Eastern Division than if it had sufficient District Judgeships warranted by a population of 4.6 million.

The Inland Empire is larger in size and population than many states. It is time that it receives its fair share of federal judicial resources, including a federal courthouse large enough to serve both its current and future needs.