

MEMORANDUM

To: Senator Margaret Rotundo
Representative Drew Gattine
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial
Affairs
Senator Anne Carney
Representative Amy Kuhn
Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

From: Amy Quinlan, State Court Administrator

Date: January 21, 2025

Re: Testimony of the Maine Judicial Branch on LD 209, The
Supplemental Budget

Good afternoon, Senator Rotundo and Representative Gattine and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, and Senator Carney and Representative Kuhn and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary.

My name is Amy Quinlan; I am the State Court Administrator for the Maine Judicial Branch. I appreciate the opportunity to come before you today to discuss the Judicial Branch's FY25 Supplemental Budget Requests. By way of brief introduction to the Maine Judicial Branch's budget submissions this year, both the Supplemental and Biennium requests are focused on improving our ability to provide timely and efficient access to justice to all Maine citizens. At the heart, we are basically people and buildings, and now technology, which we have come to rely on to enhance access to justice and ensure that each person's right to due process is met. Our budget requests reflect this focus to make sure that the Judicial Branch has sufficient resources to do our work, that our buildings are accessible and safe for the public who come to our courthouses and the people who work within them, and that the technology infrastructure which we have built to help us meet our mission to provide fair and effective access to the courts is working and

secure. I am pleased to report that we are beginning to see results with a slow but steady reduction to the backlog. Additionally, our efforts to provide electronic access to the courts and implement a modern case management system are still on track to be completed by the end of 2026/early 2027. I will more fully address this progress when we come before you to review the Biennium Budget Requests. Our Supplemental Budget Submissions are consistent with these goals.

Turning to our specific requests, they are as follows:

1. Page A-33, 4th initiative: General Fund All Other \$350,000

GAL Volume Increases. This request provides funding for a volume increase in guardian ad litem services. These are the attorneys appointed to serve as advocates for the children in child protection cases pursuant to 22 MRSA § 4005. Increases are trending higher than anticipated in this area. This initiative supplements the request for a volume increase in the Biennium for GALs, medical examiners, and interpreters. Costs for GALs are increasing much faster than anticipated due, in part, to the increase in the number and complexity of pending child protection cases. C-A-7100

2. Page A-34, 2nd initiative: General Fund All Other \$90,000

Increased Lease Costs. This request seeks funding for increased lease costs for multiple courthouse locations across the State (Bridgton, Caribou, Fort Kent, Rockland, and Portland) and for the Portland Administrative Office of the Courts. There is an immediate need for funding for this fiscal year. This request is in addition to increased costs sought through the Biennial Budget for FY26 and FY27. C-A-79

3. Page A-33, 5th initiative: General Fund All Other \$147,079

Funding for Security Equipment. The Judicial Branch is in the process of enhancing its safety readiness planning. This request seeks funding to replenish supplies and replace aging equipment, firearm supplies, trauma kits, and body armor. The supplies help protect the public, employees, and judicial marshals from violent incidents. There

is an immediate need for funding combined with the request in the Biennial Budget. This request stages the cost over time rather than one lump sum. C-A-80

4. Page A-33, 8th initiative: General Fund All Other \$126,500

Improvements to Leased Facilities. This is a one-time request for improvements to locations where MJB is leasing courthouse facilities. Improvements are often done on a cost-sharing basis with the landlord and are necessary to keep courthouses functional, safe, and ADA compliant. Funds in this initiative are for an elevator overhaul and HVAC installation in the Machias courthouse; tree work, carpet updates, and LED lighting in Knox County Courthouse; and HVAC installation for a server room in Androscoggin County. C-A-84

5. Page A-33, 9th initiative: General Fund All Other \$100,000

One-time Funding for Gmail Licensing. This is a one-time request for Gmail licensing. Since 2016, the MJB has utilized two different software platforms, Google Workspace and Microsoft Office 365. However, supporting both platforms has become inefficient and costly. The Judicial Branch is in the process of moving from Google to the Microsoft 365 environment (the platform in which most of the enterprise and government world resides). This change was important to reduce the costs and resources needed to support both systems. We expect this migration to be completed by the end of FY26. C-A-85

6. Page A-33, 1st initiative: General Fund All Other \$100,000

One-time Funding for Contractual Assistance to Support Office 365 Transition from Google Sites to SharePoint. The Judicial Branch is transitioning away from Google Workspace and migrating to the Microsoft Office 365 environment (the platform in which most of the enterprise and government world resides). Although emails were successfully transitioned in 2023, the Judicial Branch needs to hire outside contractors to complete a successful Office 365 transition from Google Sites to SharePoint, Google Files to OneDrive, Google Groups to MS Groups, and Google Calendars to MS Calendars. This is

a one-time expenditure to complete the transition so that the Judicial Branch will no longer require Google licenses. C-A-87

Thank you for your time and attention today. I am happy to try to answer any questions you may have now or at the work session.