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**DRAFT MINUTES
INDEPENDENT CITIZENS COMMISSION**

November 17, 2021

The Independent Citizens Commission met on Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. in room 171 of the State Capitol in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Chairman Banks called the meeting to order with roll call. Commission members present Chairman Banks, Mr. Jonathon Rogers, Mrs. Annabelle Imber Tuck, Mr. Clark Smith, and Phillip Fletcher. Ms. Melanie Jenkins and Mrs. Dawna Kerr - Auditor of State's office.

Consideration of minutes from October 1, 2021

A motion was made by Justice Imber Tuck and seconded by Mr. Phillip Fletcher to adopt the minutes with no corrections, The motion carried without objection.

Presentations:

Mary Garrity with BLR - Commission discussion comparing legislative and judicial salaries, travel and per diem with other states

Dr. Scott Graves with AOC - Commission discussion of duties for Supreme Court Judges, Court of Appeals Judges, Circuit and District Judges and their caseload statistics

Roy Ragland, Chief of Staff and Buddy Johnson, House Parliamentarian - Commission discussion of duties and full benefits afforded by law for Speaker of the House Members

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Handouts and complete audio of the meeting can be found at <http://citizenscommission.ar.gov>

**CHARLES A. BANKS
5300 HAWTHORNE ROAD
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72207**

August 3, 2022

Dear Governor Hutchison, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Arkansas Independent Citizens Commission,

It has been an honor to be appointed by the Governor of Arkansas to this important Commission. I am privileged to have served with you, and especially so having been selected as the chairperson.

I recognize the remainder of my term lasts no longer than the end of this year, but family duties and personal responsibilities have made it necessary for me to resign as a member and chair of this distinguished group.

The selection of each member of this Commission is an exemplary example of "citizen service". More importantly, the members are skilled, experienced, and diligent in addressing the important work of the Commission. That work will continue.

Thank you for this honor. I've enjoyed the time that I've served on the Arkansas Independent Citizen's Commission.

Best Regards,



Chuck Banks



ARKANSAS JUDICIAL COUNCIL, INC.

JUSTICE BUILDING
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201

TEL: (501) 882-9400
FAX: (501) 882-9410

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June 27, 2022

Independent Citizens Commission
State of Arkansas
State Capitol Building
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
Re: Request of Arkansas Judicial Council

Dear Commissioners:

I write this letter as the President of the Arkansas Judicial Council. Members of the Arkansas Judicial Council include our state's circuit court judges (126), judges of the Arkansas Court of Appeals (12), and Justices of the Arkansas Supreme Court (7).

I have been authorized by the Council's Board of Directors to request a cost-of-living adjustment for our state court judges. Governor Hutchinson granted a 2% wage increase for all state employees in February, citing record inflationary pressures due to the pandemic. In May, Governor Hutchinson also authorized state agencies to use an additional 5% of their total payroll costs for merit raises for employees, again citing the rising costs of living.

Over the last few years, the Commission has done an excellent job acknowledging the hard work of our state's judges. Judges and their staffs deal with difficult situations with individuals facing a variety of problems. We feel our response during the pandemic has been exemplary. We often put our own health at risk to ensure courts in our state remained open. Evidence of this includes our caseload clearance rate for all cases in 2021, which was 93%.

We thank you in advance for your fair consideration of our request.

Respectfully submitted,

Edwin Keaton
President

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Supreme Court of Arkansas

JOHN DAN KEMP
CHIEF JUSTICE

JUSTICE BUILDING
625 MARSHALL STREET
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201

PHONE (501) 682-6873
FAX (501) 683-4006
EMAIL john.dan.kemp@arcourts.gov

September 15, 2022

Independent Citizens Commission
State of Arkansas
State Capitol Building
Little Rock, AR 72201

Re: Request of Arkansas Supreme Court

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing in my capacity as Chief Justice of the Arkansas Supreme Court and on behalf of the entire Arkansas Judiciary in support of the request for a cost-of-living adjustment for our state court judges and justices.

In February of this year, due to record inflationary pressures caused by the pandemic, Governor Hutchinson granted all state employees a 2% wage increase. In May, responding to the still-rising cost of living, Governor Hutchinson authorized state agencies to grant an additional 5% merit raise for all employees.

Our state's judges and their staff have responded admirably to the many changes and challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Their perseverance in keeping our judicial system open and accessible to the citizens of this state despite the obvious health risks they faced is commendable.

In the past, this Commission has recognized the good work and dedication of our state's judges and justices. I hope you will favorably consider this request.

Sincerely,

John Dan Kemp



Arkansas District Judges Council

September 24, 2022

Reid Harrod
President
Ashley County District Judge

Randy Hill
Vice President
Clark County District Judge

Dale K. Ramsey
Third District Representative
Carroll and Madison Counties District Judge

Teresa Smith
First District Representative
Lonoke County District Judge

Mark Leverett
Second District Representative
Pulaski County District Judge

Graham Nations
Third District Representative
Washington County District Judge

Jack Barker
Fourth District Representative
Union County District Judge

Jeff Harper
Immediate Past President
Washington County District Judge

Arkansas Independent Citizens Commission
c/o Arkansas Auditor of State
State Capitol Building
500 Woodlane Street, Suite 230
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Sirs/Madam:

Arkansas State District Court Judges respectfully request a salary increase totaling an increase of 7%, 2% given in February, 2022, by Governor Hutchinson and an additional 5% given by the Governor in May of this year. This would mean that state district judges will be afforded the same pay increase as state employees.

Thank you for your work on behalf of Arkansans!

Sincerely,

Reid Harrod
Reid Harrod, President
Arkansas District Judges Council



Bob McMahan
Prosecutor Coordinator

State of Arkansas
Office of the Prosecutor Coordinator

323 Center, Suite 750
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
(501) 682-3671/Fax (501) 682-5004

Lori Kumpuris
Deputy Prosecutor
Coordinator

September 26, 2022

Independent Citizens Commission
State Capitol Building
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

RE: Arkansas Prosecuting Attorneys

Dear Commissioners:

In anticipation of the Independent Citizens Commission meeting presently scheduled for Friday, September 30, 2022, I have been authorized by the Prosecution Coordination Commission to request a cost of living/salary adjustment consistent with any salary adjustment awarded to Arkansas Circuit Judges.

When the Commission first considered salary adjustments for Arkansas Prosecuting Attorneys, a decision was made to set the salaries of Division A Prosecuting Attorneys at 95% of the salaries of Arkansas Circuit Judges. The salaries of Division B Prosecuting Attorneys were set at 85% of Division A salaries. It is our request that any adjustments continue to maintain these percentages.

A representative will attend the upcoming meeting and be available to answer questions and provide additional information. The Prosecution Coordination Commission thanks you for considering our proposal.

Sincerely,

Bob McMahan
Prosecutor Coordinator

BM/ti