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| Alliance of California Judges |
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| July 13, 2017 |
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| Dear California Media (FYI, the following has been sent to our Alliance members),Ever since our inception, we’ve been telling you about the bloat and the overreach of our statewide bureaucracy, the Administrative Office of the Courts.  We’ve consistently faulted the AOC -- and its purported overseers, the Judicial Council -- for its arrogance and poor decision-making.  Some of you may have thought that our criticisms went over the top; others have attempted to marginalize us for failing "to speak with one voice."  Thankfully, hundreds of you have supported us in raising these concerns.We direct your attention to the recent story entitled, “Controversial photos at Judicial Council party prompt complaints of racial insensitivity,” which you can find at this [link](https://cnsex.courthousenews.com/owa/redir.aspx?C=QpmQG05xKUUl2D9T5sdXUqdoFVXCmrePy_Hxe7d_nGqUxeLN58rUCA..&URL=http%3a%2f%2fabc7news.com%2f2207223%2f).  The piece, which aired on the San Francisco ABC affiliate, documents a Halloween party gone terribly wrong, at which AOC staff members in Sacramento engaged in activities that were highly offensive and antithetical to the core mission of the judicial branch.As of last November, the AOC has a workforce of over 740 employees.  Apparently, many of them have too much time on their hands and not enough sense and sensitivity to use it wisely.This is the same outfit entrusted with the management of a multi-billion-dollar construction fund.  This is the agency that has insisted on overseeing the education of sitting judges.  How can the AOC be trusted to administer the largest court system in the world when it can’t keep its own staff in check?Why should this matter to every judge?  Because for far too long the controversies involving the AOC, and those tasked to supervise them, the Judicial Council, have besmirched our branch.....us.  We will not sit back in silence while unelected bureaucrats and handpicked Judicial Council members hide behind our robes.We must all speak out.  This sorry episode is simply another example of the need to bolster accountability and transparency by democratizing the Judicial Council.  If the Chief Justice won’t agree to restructure the Judicial Council so its judicial members are elected by their peers, then it is high time for the legislature to take control of judicial branch funds away from the Judicial Council and place those funds in the hands of a trial court budget commission consisting of trial judges elected by their peers. If you agree we have all suffered long enough at the hands of this rudderless and bloated bureaucracy, join us.Directors, Alliance of California Judges |

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