



The Florida House of Representatives

Office of the Speaker

Paul Renner
Speaker

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Via electronic mail and hand delivery

Chief Justice Carlos G. Muñiz
Florida Supreme Court
500 South Duval Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1925
outlawj@flcourts.org

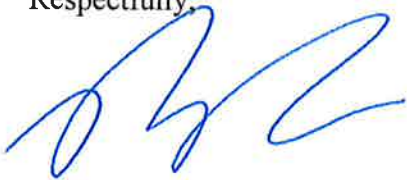
Dear Chief Justice Muñiz,

Eighteen months ago, the Court “determined that a sixth appellate district should be created in Florida and that accompanying changes should be made to the existing boundaries of the First, Second, and Fifth districts.” *In re: Redefinition of Appellate Districts and Certification of Need for Additional Appellate Judges*, 345 So. 3d 703 (Fla. 2021). The “primary rationale” for the creation of the new district court and the concomitant geographic realignment of district lines was to “promote public trust and confidence.” *Id.* at 704. Pursuant to Rule 2.241 of the Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration, public trust and confidence are affected by judicial workloads and geographic and demographic composition, among other factors. *See Fla. R. Gen. Prac. & Jud. Admin. 2.241(c)(5), (d)(5).*

Although Florida’s appellate districts have recently been realigned, the boundaries of Florida’s judicial circuits have been unchanged for decades despite significant population and demographic changes during that timeframe. The size of our judicial circuits varies widely, ranging from approximately 2.7 million people (in the Eleventh Circuit) to less than 100,000 people (in the Sixteenth Circuit). I believe that the consolidation of circuits might lead to greater efficiencies and uniformity in the judicial process, thereby increasing public trust and confidence. I also believe that the consolidation of circuits would result in improved economies of scale in the judiciary’s back-office operations, leading to substantial cost savings for Florida’s taxpayers.

Accordingly, as part of its annual analysis of the need to increase, decrease, or redefine judicial circuits, I ask the Court to consider these factors and any others that it deems relevant. *See Fla. R. Gen. Prac. & Jud. Admin. 2.241* (Court's commentary to 2013 amendment) (explaining that Rule 2.241 was amended in 2013 "so the supreme court's annual certification process will include an analysis of the need to increase, decrease, or redefine judicial circuits."); *In re Amendments to Fla. R. Jud. Admin. 2.240 and 2.241*, 129 So. 3d 358 (Fla. 2013) ("the certification process for the appellate districts and the judicial circuits must be completed in conjunction with the Court's annual determination regarding the need for judges under rule 2.240(d)."). I appreciate the Court's consideration of this request.

Respectfully,



Paul Renner, Speaker of the House