

September 12, 2022

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 2443 (Cooley) – Request for Signature

Dear Governor Newsom:

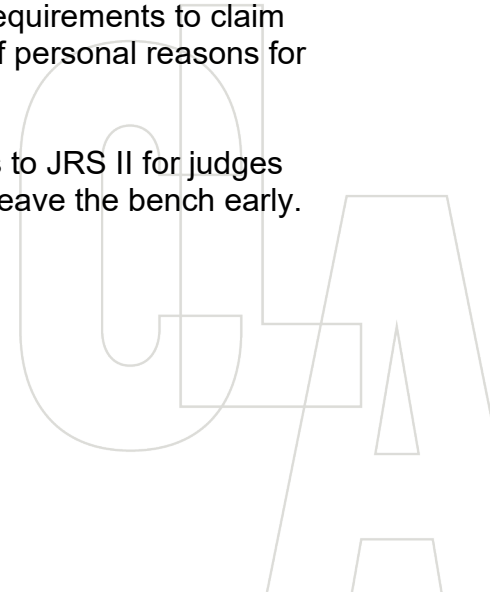
The California Lawyers Association (CLA) respectfully requests your signature on AB 2443. AB 2443 is sponsored by the California Judges Association (CJA) and passed unanimously in both the Assembly and Senate.

By way of background, CLA has approximately 72,000 members and is one of the largest statewide voluntary bar associations in the United States. CLA's mission is promoting excellence, diversity, and inclusion in the legal profession and fairness in the administration of justice and the rule of law. We often work with our colleagues in the judicial branch on issues of overlapping interest. Examples include 1) the California Civility Task Force, a joint project of CJA and CLA that developed proposals to improve civility in California's legal profession, and 2) the Judicial Diversity Summit, held every five years since 2006 with the 2021 event presented by CJA, CLA, and the Judicial Council of California.

AB 2443 is the product of CJA's work with CalPERS and the Department of Finance. The bill adds provisions relating to early retirement and deferral options for judges who are members of the Judges Retirement System II (JRS II) plan.

Under existing JRS II provisions, a judge is eligible to retire upon attaining 65 years of age with 20 or more years of service or upon attaining 70 years of age with a minimum of 5 years of service. Judges must meet these vesting requirements to claim their benefits regardless of declining health, burnout, or a variety of personal reasons for leaving the bench.

CJA hired a pension actuary to develop cost-neutral options to JRS II for judges who have served a significant period of time but feel they need to leave the bench early.



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To address concerns about the potential impact of providing options for judges to leave early, the bill contains a 5-year sunset and implementation will be delayed for 1 year.

AB 2443 provides for judges to leave 5 years earlier than currently available if they are either 1) at least 60 years old with at least 15 years of service, or 2) at least 65 years old with at least 10 years of service, and to choose between two different deferral options, a standard deferral option and an extended deferral option.

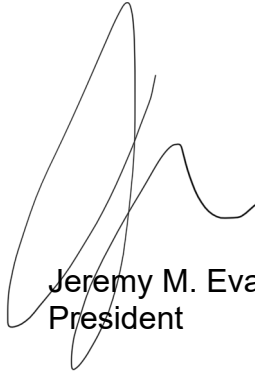
We believe this bill will have a positive impact on the judicial branch and the overall administration of justice in California.

For all of these reasons, CLA respectfully requests your signature on AB 2443.

Sincerely,



Oyango A. Snell
CEO and Executive Director



Jeremy M. Evans
President

cc: Assemblymember Ken Cooley