



STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

DOUGLAS A. DUCEY
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

May 18, 2016

The Honorable Michele Reagan
Secretary of State
1700 W. Washington, 7th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Secretary Reagan:

Today, after much consideration, I signed House Bill 2537, which increases the number of justices on the Arizona Supreme Court from five to seven. The measure puts Arizona on par with states that have similar or smaller resident populations, yet more Supreme Court justices, including Nevada, Colorado, Washington, Wisconsin and Massachusetts.

Arizonans deserve swift justice from the judicial branch. Adding more voices will ensure that the court can increase efficiency, hear more cases and issue more opinions.

I appreciate the array of viewpoints on this issue. I have listened, researched and weighed all the arguments carefully before making a final decision.

Some, particularly national activists and media who aren't familiar with our system here, have inaccurately described this as "court packing." That's just wrong. Arizona's two new justices will be selected under our state's nationally-renowned merit selection system, which includes nominations of qualified applicants by the Commission on Appellate Court Appointments.

The fact is, unlike the federal system, I can't simply appoint anyone. My experience so far has been that the merit selection system produces excellent candidates – Democrats, Republicans and Independents. When I made my first appointment to the Supreme Court early this year, the candidates were superb and the decision very hard to make. The record will show that in my judicial appointments to date I have selected several judges who are not members of my own political party, including my selection for the Supreme Court.

Some have said this bill is unnecessary, and that the court can handle its caseload just fine. But I believe you'll hear a different story from the businesses and individuals facing litigation, who are in need of certainty.

The Honorable Michele Reagan

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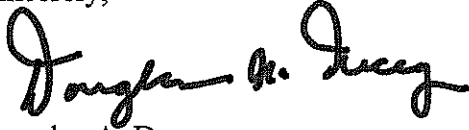
Finally, some have suggested this policy is at odds with the goal of streamlining and simplifying state government. I disagree. Our goal is a state government that works for the people and that's efficient and effective. I believe this bill is consistent with that objective.

The judicial branch is a critical and co-equal branch of our state government. This bill provides the court with the resources to do its job in a growing and prosperous state.

I appreciate Representative J.D. Mesnard's leadership on this legislation.

I would also like to note my high regard for Chief Justice Scott Bales. He is of the utmost integrity and our court is in excellent hands under his stewardship. Arizona is lucky to have such a qualified and thoughtful justice guiding our Supreme Court. I look forward to continuing to work with him and our entire judicial branch in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas A. Ducey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Douglas A. Ducey
Governor
State of Arizona

cc: The Honorable David Gowan
The Honorable Andy Biggs
The Honorable J.D. Mesnard