

Blue Ribbon Commission
Feedback from Community and other Meetings and directly-received Documents
(based on the 4 questions asked by the BRC)
Updated 6/15/11 (Added since last update)

Regional meetings with info included below:

Atchison, Beloit, Chanute, Colby, Dodge City, Emporia, Garden City, Hays, Hutchinson, Independence, Junction City, Liberal, Norton, Overland Park, Pittsburg, Salina, Topeka 1, Topeka 2, Wichita.

Total attendance: by-invitation, 434; public, 209.

Regional meetings not yet included below: None.

1. Are there things the courts do locally that could be performed regionally or at one central statewide location to improve their efficiency?

a. Regionalize

1. E.g., in Hays, 17 counties have gone together for community corrections.
2. Traffic and limited cases could probably be done regionally.
3. Regionalization or centralization could occur with payment systems, e.g., traffic, as had occurred with child support – that helped the local courts.
4. High profile difficult cases requiring increased security should occur only in special or urban districts because the high security needs are (or could be) in place there.
5. Traffic ticket data entry could be done regionally using technology.
6. Care and Treatment hearings for the mentally ill in state hospitals might be regionalized to avoid travel to local courts.
7. Judges can travel to neighboring courthouses with technology.
8. The processing of traffic cases could be consolidated statewide.
9. It is a fallacy to think we could save a bunch of money by forming mega-districts.
10. Probably don't need 31 judicial districts.
11. Last year, Wallace County had a total of 119 actions.
12. One person supports trying to find efficiencies, but is opposed to consolidation.
13. Communities lose their identity when courthouses close.
14. Having a courthouse within 70 miles would be fine if they close some courthouses.
15. There are things that could be done regionally, but we will be penalizing small communities in the process.
16. If the courts are consolidated, a new courthouse would be needed in Ford County. The concern is who would pay for it.
17. If the courts are consolidated, we do not want to have people in outlying areas driving miles to a courthouse.

18. It is a long drive from Dodge to Decatur County.
19. Concerned with the unintended consequences of closing down courthouses.
20. If we consolidate into regional courthouses, the lawyers will move to the cities with courthouses.
21. Suggested Kansas Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing could coordinate all services to the court when a sign interpreter is needed.
22. Believes that E-filing could be possibly be regionalized.
23. There is more success with finding forms that have already been drafted by the Judicial Council.
24. Transcriptionists could be regionalized and sent a recording by email to transcribe.
25. It would be ok to not have a courthouse in Oswego. A judge would like to see everything in Parsons. This would require legislative change.
26. Why is technology not being used to bring urban work to the rural areas? That would save jobs and keep services intact.
27. If hearings by video conference are acceptable, we can transport our productivity to other areas.

b. Keep at local level

1. Probation services need to be at a local level; those on probation are the least able to travel on a regional level.
2. Probationers are doing good to hold down a job, let alone travel to meet with a probation officer in another county. They've got to survive; forcing them to travel backs them into a corner where they would do things they wouldn't ordinarily do. You're not dealing with robots, you're dealing with people. If a guy can't get to the hearing, he gets put in jail; then his family goes on welfare, and on and on.
3. Judges are good at working with attorneys in planning which of the two courthouses certain hearings will be held in; they take into consideration the needs of the clients/defendants.
4. Rural areas need consideration for their people, just like urban areas.
5. If we went to regional courts, CASA would have a harder time recruiting local advocates because of travel.
6. We're pretty lucky here in the 31st because of accessibility to the judges. If there is delay here, it's not the fault of the courts. Usually when the parties are ready, the courts are ready. We wouldn't want to lose that.
7. There are very few caseloads that can be dealt with regionally; most need to be kept within their own counties.
8. Not much more consolidation that can be done in the court system.
9. Atchison has no court problems that can't be solved locally. Change should not be made just for the sake of change.
10. Either get the state back in the district court system, or turn it all back over to the county.

11. Take the state out of the courts, and let each county have its own court, as it was before 1977.
12. Let each county pay for its own judge and clerk but in return let the county keep the revenue that the court generates.
13. Would like to be able to file cases within the district.
14. Efficiency should not come at the expense of the defendant.
15. It is difficult to stay consistent in policies when districts become large.
16. Travel time is another concern when the districts become large.
17. Some litigants do not have access to cars or money for transportation.
18. If officer have to travel far to get a search warrant, the situation could change by the time he gets back.
19. Community corrections officers have to supervise people where they live.
20. The Protection from Abuse docket needs to stay local.
21. There are federal guidelines which state that interested children need to be at certain custody hearings. If the hearings are held at distant locations, it will result in a lot of travel time away from school.
22. Child in Need of Care and juvenile offense cases should be kept local so that we do not lose the human element.
23. It would be difficult for sheriff's departments if they had to send a couple of officers to transport offenders to distant places because their county would be short-staffed.
24. Need to have local legal aid offices in each county.
25. County courthouses and hearings as many indigent defendants are not in jail and do not have funds to get to a county seat other than their own.
26. Centralizing services is more expensive for the counties. When the state wants to cut costs they pass them down to the counties. It is felt that is being done now with DUIs, medical bills, and other items.
27. If a sheriff has to drive all over the region to get a prisoner to court, not only will the county pay more for gas, but the county will have to pay overtime to get an off-duty deputy to transport prisoners.
28. When the state collects taxes, there is a promise of a certain level of services, and public safety is a promise.
29. The district previously purchased community services from Salina, and things did not work as well when they were part of a larger district. They do not want to go back to the way things were.
30. If you can file cases anywhere in the district, how would that work for title work? How would you do title searches?
31. The counties are just barely making it now, and if the state shifts more expenses to the counties, how will they meet them?
32. Criminals come from the cities to prey on the elderly in the rural counties. The counties need more help, not more of a burden.

33. The judge in every county is the one person who can make the best decision to address a problem.
34. You have to look at the people the courts are serving. High gas prices affect the poor and disabled. You cannot ask them to drive longer distances for services.
35. A benefit of the local system is that local youth can see how the judicial process works. Leadership groups also are exposed to the court system and the judicial process.
36. The court system is part of the quality of life across the state.
37. As we lose protection and the opportunity to access the system, what tends to happen is that we place a greater burden on those who live in rural areas in terms of travel and the ability to find counsel.

2. How could the courts use technology to make their operations more cost-effective or improve access to the courts?

a. A/V Technology

1. Use video hearings.
2. Teleconferencing is part of the answer for appearances.
3. Use video systems (would also help cut down on the need for court reporters).
4. Videoconferencing to mental hospital for care and treatment (fine because witnesses' caliber - doctors and such - so great there isn't concern with not having them in person).
5. Videoconferencing for juvenile detention - great, especially when the youth is in placement in E. Kansas because they would not need to be transported back and forth.
6. Juvenile first hearing might be ok over video, and some other juvenile appearances.
7. Review hearings could also be done through video-conferencing.
8. Videoconferencing for adult detention.
9. Videoconferencing for first appearances.
10. Use audio and video recording systems to record proceedings in case of an appeal (some courthouses/rooms have equipment & some don't).
11. Allow W. KS judges to hold hearings in E. KS through audio/ video conferencing.
12. Videoconferencing: some judges don't use it much; some judges use it.
13. It is used for 1st appearances, juveniles, mental illness cases.
14. County attorney uses it quite a bit wherever the opportunity can work; it was very helpful when one judge was in a multi-month jury trial.
15. It's a local issue; helps cut down on transportation time and costs. Saves local money, but not state general fund money. One attorney files 40-45

care/treatment cases/year; transportation costs would be significant; use of videoconferencing may cut down transportation needs from 4 trips to 1-2 trips/case.

16. It is good for some hearings, but not a fix-all for everything. Sometimes a judge just plain needs to hear and see the hearing in person.
17. Use of technology is making a good difference. All documents are being scanned. Court documents can be searched at Kansas.gov for a fee.
18. Use A/V technology for appellate court hearings.
19. Utilize video conferencing for hearings and motions which would cut down on judge travel. Would also cut down on law enforcement travel.
20. The courts should utilize the KAN ED system which is an existing statewide infrastructure already in place.
21. Utilize audio/visual technology when a witness is testifying on something that is not a credibility issue. An example would be a chemist from the KBI. They can testify as to what a substance tested out as via video.
22. Should make a record based on an audio/visual recording. This creates a very complete record.
23. Create an audio/visual record of Driver's License Suspension hearings so that if they are appealed to the District Court, a record exists and the judge does not have to start from the beginning.
24. Technology should be used that would allow judges from one court to hear cases in another court without physically traveling.
25. Audio-visual records would reduce the number of continuances due to requests to complete the record. Also reduces the work for the clerk in preparing the record for the Appellate Court. If the case is appealed to the Appellate Court, they can hire a transcriptionist to create a paper record if they want one.
26. It may be possible to have videoconferences for initial hearings.
27. SRS seems to now require certain video software that is causing problems.
28. IT staff is virtually nonexistent in rural or small courts - there is a need for OJA to provide technical support to the local courts statewide.
29. IT staff in the counties really doesn't understand the courts or needs of courts.
30. Courts must use technology because they have to - technology increases efficiency.
31. E-filing and videoconferencing have to be used – they will increase efficiencies and cut down on inefficient travel. Judges must adjust - there is no choice.
32. Some unique software is required for video and audio conferencing – they're good but need intense IT support. Use publicly available off-the-shelf software –e.g., Skype - rather than internally or externally developed unique software.

33. How will old paper records be brought into the paperless environment, e.g., information stored in hard copy in the caves in Hutchinson. Will that eventually be stored electronically?
34. Computers are used now in courtrooms, but consistency is needed across all districts with systems – storage, access, processes and policies need to be consistent to be able to move people around or move work to the people.
35. Skype is used and should be.
36. Video dedicated line costs are getting very expensive.
37. Phone conferences can be used for some first appearances.
38. Travel for juvenile offender cases is a huge cost that could be cut with technology.
39. It may be possible to have videoconferences for initial hearings.
40. First appearances and other early hearings in legal processes could be heard through video/audio-conferencing, but not trials or sentencing hearings.
41. There is a shortage of qualified interpreters, but video remote conferencing can help alleviate that, especially with short hearings.
42. “Realtime captioning” computer technology assists deaf court attendees and is especially good in noisy courtrooms.
43. Kansas Legal Services thru technology provides on-line and hard copy forms for pro se's, including Kansas-specific forms. Technology is used in completing the forms.
44. On-line and live assistance with forms use is also provided by KLS to pro se litigants.
45. KLS has an on-line list of newspapers that may be used for legal notices.
46. Counsel should be able to appear by phone or video, maybe with the client live before the judge.
47. Default divorces should be able to be completed by affidavit with no appearances at all.
48. In early hearings, technology could be used.
49. Some expert witnesses could testify that way.
50. Technology can help with timeliness.
51. SKYPE and video can speed up processes.
52. Videotape juvenile hearings to avoid transportation concerns/costs.
53. Use other technology (e.g., ankle bracelets) to reduce costs.
54. Skype or other internet-based appearances should be fine for technical witnesses in particular, should be mandated statewide, and should be admissible in jury trials.
55. FullCourt should be accessible at every court state-wide from every court state-wide. All counties should be able to share all information.
56. All state and local law enforcement agencies and courts should have compatible and interactive systems to get to a “single entry” system – that would lead to even more efficiency.
57. Court notes needed to be accessible to clerks during hearings, and that clerks should be able to see what was happening in court during court.

58. KCJIS should be compatible with the Federal tracking system.
59. Multiple entries in various systems are required. This is crazily inefficient.
60. Ticket information now is not timely entered by officers, and that creates more work for clerks because often the tickets are paid before the info is entered in the system – this requires letters from the clerk’s office to the ticket payers.
61. Having library or court-house computers available to pro se's could help.
62. Videoconferencing/teleconferencing could be used in a variety of hearing types (first appearances, scheduling conferences, etc.), with a resultant cut in travel time and costs, but systems upgrades will be needed.
63. Means of training/assisting attorneys with presenting evidence with technology need to be implemented.
64. Search warrants and other processes thru technology need to be implemented.
65. FullCourt software is not compatible with several other systems.
66. Videoconferencing to the jails should be universal.
67. All systems used in the justice system should be compatible.
68. Transcripts and stenographers, both expensive, might be replaced by videoing of court processes, and the placing of those on-line.
69. Audio recording of JO hearings with parents present is a need.
70. Videotaping court procedures and making them publically accessible might help prevent some perceived abuse of justice situations.
71. Transparency of CINC cases (video tape all with public access, e.g.) is a need.
72. All courts should use the same software and all data should be on the same server.
73. Some telephone appearances are OK, especially with civil cases.
74. Who pays for and supports technology?
75. Reduced travel is a benefit of technology.
76. Pro ses could be helped with forms completable on-line if instructions were included.
77. Some types of hearings could be done with video/audio/telephone.
78. Any on-line forms should have clear instructions for what is needed in the forms.
79. Use video conferencing for remote hearings.
80. TVCC needs to be expanded and used effectively.
81. Videoconferencing for care and treatment works well.
82. Videoconference Care and Treatment hearings from the state hospitals to the local courts.
83. Videoconferencing can be hooked up to two rooms so that clients have an opportunity to privately converse with their attorney.
84. The argument that videoconferencing is inadequate because judges do not have the opportunity to pick up on subtle expressions is without merit because judges do not do that well with picking up on subtle expressions in face to face hearings.

85. State should pay for the new technology in the district courts.
86. We can expand the use of technology.
87. I think technology could be used in traffic law, but the more definite criminal cases need face to face interaction.
88. Skype works great.
89. Both state hospitals should use the same videoconferencing program.
90. To watch a sheriff or police department's video you have to have their software program.
91. Standards need to be established so technology is compatible.
92. Initial appearances can be handled through technology.
93. Would like to see more use of videoconferencing.
94. Department of Corrections should use videoconferencing technology instead of transporting prisoners to hearings.
95. The state hospitals should use the same videoconferencing program.
96. In the Salina District Court, they have been videoconferencing for 10 years.
97. In the Salina District Court, there is an opportunity for private counsel through videoconferencing.
98. Cost savings to the sheriff's department has been tremendous through the use of videoconferencing.
99. The patient's stay at the mental hospital tends to be shorter and the outcomes better because there is no interruption of treatment to travel to hearings.
100. The video recordings of some sheriff and police departments cannot be played on other machines.
101. One thing to remember with videoconferencing is that we need to be able to accommodate people who may request being in the courtroom.
102. Reno County has recording equipment that has a separate track for each audio.
103. One court records proceedings electronically and "read-backs" are efficient as they play back from the recorder.
104. Bonds can be set by phone on occasion.
105. Preliminary hearings could use videoconference technology.
106. It would be nice if the KBI had the equipment to videoconference.
107. In some civil matters videoconferencing might have merit.
108. Attorneys already appear by phone.
109. Idea of videoconferencing is a good one; it is like an enhanced telephone appearance.
110. Videotaping in all courtrooms should be a requirement.
111. Suggested telephone appearances. Appearing by telephone is easier for attorneys and parties.
112. Liked how Shawnee County had their own software which allowed others to check the status of cases online; would like it available everywhere.
113. The Supreme Court made it so that the status of appeals cases is available online.

114. Has had good experience with technology.
115. Videoconferencing to the jail works well.
116. Important to make sure the person on the phone is the appropriate party.
117. Encourages the use of Skype.
118. The interpreter services offered by phone are very expensive.
119. Have Wi-Fi connection for interpreters to use a webcam or laptop when needed.
120. Video conferencing saves the county money by not having law enforcement transport prisoners for first appearances.
121. Video conferencing capabilities should be made in all of the courts across the state and KBI has invested in video conferencing to not send forensic scientists out on the road for a short 5-10 testimony.
122. Expressed concern with technology with respect to the physical safety and privacy of victims.
123. Could see benefits such as safety to video conferencing by not having face-to-face confrontations to further the intimidations and could see advantages as far as transportation and travel.
124. Recommends a more widespread utilization of video conferencing and teleconferencing technology for non-critical stage hearings.
125. To save money immediately and with minimal expense, video conferencing equipment should be put in all courthouses and juvenile detention facilities across Kansas.
126. Whatever system is implemented needs to be consistent across the state.
127. Western district of Missouri handles pre-trial work not in person.
128. A judge uses videoconferencing a lot for first appearances. County pays travel costs. Videoconferencing could be used more if we had e-filing – so that judges had access to files.
129. Videoconferencing should be used as a tool for efficiency. This would be so helpful in uncontested divorces, etc.
130. It's sometimes difficult for the smaller districts to get IT support.
131. Video conferencing should be used for some hearings, such as first appearances.
132. Technology can sometimes pay for itself.
133. Sometimes counties are willing to share technology. Driving from one county to another could still present a savings over driving to Larned or Osawatomie for mental health hearings.
134. Teleconferencing does not replace the need for judges.

- b.** **E-everything:**
1. Go with e-filing.

2. Electronic filing crucial (must be sure all counties have computer systems that are capable of handling this), and would cut down on the time needed to process caseload.
3. Put records online so that one can see what is filed without having to go to courthouse.
4. Do more things electronically – this would save money: signing orders; forwarding copies to parties; filing pleadings; videoconferencing for hearings (saves travel and court time). Hardware purchases would cost initially, but would pay off later.
5. E-filing would cut down on the time needed to process DMJ caseload.
6. E-filing would be more convenient for attorneys and clerks.
7. More information s/b available on the web. A manual search for records in many places is still necessary.
8. Seek federal funding for e-filing rather than place this burden on state finances.
9. The federal system requires e-filing. Federal courts have used e-filing and document search/retrieval for years. It worked just fine.
10. The state's plan for e-filing is pending budget decisions in the legislature.
11. E-filing would be a good thing.
12. Use of paypal would help simplify the process of filing for the clerks. Not all counties accept credit cards.
13. Court Services could be better provided electronically by using the Kansas Prosecutors System across the state. This increases efficiencies in the clerk's offices.
14. Obtain judges signatures for pleadings and judgments through e-mail. That would save travel time for attorneys and judges.
15. Make all court documents available online.
16. E-filing would save money. Having documents available online and through e-mail would also save time and money for the counties, since none of the postage or paper expenses are paid by the state.
17. Leavenworth County uses case retrieval e-technology now and does not have problems; it is nice to go online in the counties that do have online access to files.
18. Should be more transparency so e-filing would be terrific - could then look at legal info locally or elsewhere in the state.
19. Combine Municipal Court info with District Court info. Now cannot get good criminal conviction information for the entire state because of different (and sometimes no) systems used throughout the state.
20. E-filing could be very good especially if it is not mandatory.
21. It will clearly help staff with the elimination of paperwork.
22. Court rules require paper records to be kept, so E-filing could be more useful if the rules were changed to not require retention of paper records.
23. IT staff must be hired in-house or by contract. PCs can be analyzed from a remote location.

24. Technology can be a problem. But we have to "go there" even if it's hard to adjust.
25. There will be problems with e-filing – costs to train and ongoing IT support costs.
26. Paperless? What happens if the systems change? Will what's recorded on current or new systems be converted at a later date to whatever new systems are developed? Or will the older systems still be accessible?
27. Urban districts typically have an IT staff in-house, usually paid for by the county.
28. E-filing is coming and the courts will adjust, but there must be dedicated IT staff almost 24/7 to support e-filing.
29. On-line availability of court records would be extremely helpful to KLS, but pro se's are not adept at technology and rarely have access to technology.
30. Shawnee County's limited actions docket increased efficiency. Electronic filing system for those cases created even greater efficiencies.
31. The state should fund the entire e-filing system for Kansas courts.
32. Attorneys using e-filing in Shawnee County for the limited actions cases are very favorable towards e-filing, and noted the system was used for child support and domestic cases also.
33. With e-filing, IT support should be available through the vendor, on-line help, and OJA.
34. E-filing should be implemented ASAP.
35. E-filing will lead to efficiencies.
36. All law enforcement should use e-filing.
37. E-filing's queuing of entry types is a positive, as is e-mailing within the system.
38. Going paperless should help the courts with space and other costs.
39. E-filing will result eventually in substantial cost savings, streamlining of processes, and the ability to do things from any location, but with initially a substantial outlay of funds.
40. Retrieval of documents electronically should be a part of the e-filing system.
41. Go paperless in the court system.
42. Making computers accessible to the pro se public will be necessary with e-filing.
43. Web-based forms could be completed and submitted electronically.
44. E-documents must be secure – fraud is always a possibility.
45. Filing and submission of forms on-line should be available.
46. Downloading of court records should be in place.
47. All documents filed in cases should be able to be accessed online by Kansas.Gov account holders (would eliminate a court clerk employee having to take phone calls and then to fax, e-mail or mail the requested document, and eliminate mailing and fax charges).
48. Newer technology that is compatible needs to be used throughout the state.
49. Compatible technology would allow clerks to remotely work in other courts.

50. FullCourt needs to be web based so that courts can access any other court in the state.
51. Technology needs to be supported at the state level. Technicians are not always available locally, and when they are they do not always know the details of the court systems.
52. Electronic filing and video conferencing can help. This can result in sharing of resources between courthouses.
53. Have a centralized statewide case management system instead of individual servers in each courthouse. This would allow system and data access across county and district boundaries.
54. Give all interested agencies and entities read-only access to FullCourt.
55. There is a cost associated with providing user licenses to FullCourt to all who would want it.
56. One benefit to statewide access to FullCourt is those who write presentence investigation reports would have ready access to journal entries.
57. E-filing would help a great deal.
58. E-filing is a great thing.
59. It would be great to access the case file and documents electronically on the bench.
60. Courts should be equipped to take payment by credit card when the defendants can pay
61. E-filing would save attorneys a lot of money.
62. E-filing could reduce paperwork storage units.
63. The work of the courts could be distributed electronically throughout the state.
64. There are electronic ways to deal with emergencies when judges are out of the county.
65. It would be nice if we had the ability to have electronic search warrants.
66. Some judges have search warrants faxed to their home at night.
67. E-filing will help with inconsistent hours of operation at courthouses.
68. One person would like to see a computer at every bench.
69. Continuing education about computers might be an option.
70. Kansas might permit e-warrants as other states.
71. Federal Court requires use of technology, but makes exceptions when needed.
72. E-filing would be helpful.
73. Federal court has mandatory e-filing.
74. Supreme Court is working on putting together a statewide e-filing system.
75. Concerned with the many comments disparaging technology.
76. The problem is not with technology itself, but with financing technology.
77. The low bidder gets the job and that is why the technology does not work half of the time.

78. The courts may need to have an Information Technology person who is responsible for the integration of all the technology.
79. Old buildings are being asked to do videoconferencing, and the backbone structure is not there.
80. In a business we have to replace and replace with new technologies, and it seems government has not done that.
81. When e-filing becomes available the hope is it will also be available in the Spanish language.
82. Would like an online database where one could look up the judge on a case, the parties, and the decisions made.
83. E-filing would help me a great deal.
84. Does not think e-filing restricts access.
85. Computer terminals should be available in the lobby of the courthouse with instructions.
86. Would like to see technology in which if the victims input their contact information they will receive instant notification from the courts when perpetrator is released from custody or changes supervision status.
87. E-filing would make jobs in the court easier, especially for clerks, and it will save money for the court system and county funding.
88. Video conferencing is preferred over Skype because there are more options (i.e. zoom in and out, less pauses, more clear).
89. E-filing saves significant time to process cases and saves money for file folders, paper, outside agencies driving to courthouse to view files, storages costs, etc.
90. E-filing would free up staff in the courts and free up money to litigants by attorneys not having to always go to the courthouse.
91. E-filing can be good. Basic systems/processes need to be modified first.
92. E-filing was cut by legislature from Judicial Branch's budget. Multi-county districts have the situation where the judge is in one county, but the file is in another county. E-filing will cure that problem. Legislature will have to find the money to make this happen.
93. Good experience in a small county with e-filing—it's quick and efficient.
94. Johnson County has e-filing. Lack of e-filing causes slowdowns, increased travel. Federal system's e-filing is very efficient. You get in trouble if you send actual paper to the federal bankruptcy court rather than e-filing.
95. E-filing is good, but lack of technology savvy could alienate a portion of our people.
96. Videoconferencing could be used more if we had e-filing – so that judges had access to files.
97. Complaint to OJA: Clerks keep getting more responsibilities, but nothing is ever taken away. E-filing would help alleviate work/tasks for her.

c. Anti-technology

1. Technology is good, but there are things that can be missed in a trial by camera. Technology will not take the place of the human element - judge needs human contact.
2. Concerns with de-humanization of having people interact with courts solely through technology. Offenders are more shaken up through face-to-face contact with judge.
3. Juveniles need face-to-face contact with a judge. The nervousness of going in front of the judge impresses upon them the seriousness of the situation and their offense. Relationships can be established through face-to-face contact. Interacting with judge solely through monitor is too close to a video game.
4. Domestic and sexual assault victim safety and privacy are critical. Many victims are unrepresented and video conferencing can be very threatening to them.
5. These are people courts; some things can't be handled by electronics – videoconferencing is just not the same thing.
6. A judge can't evaluate the demeanor of a defendant by video.
7. Defendants seem to show more respect when there's a physical presence of a judge rather than a video conference. It's essential to have all the parties in the same room.
8. Videoconferencing is not the best form of justice; it's for the convenience of the sheriff's department.
9. People need to have a judge looking them in the eye – not videoconferencing.
10. Not in favor of videoconferencing.
11. Technology can be useful but it is difficult to keep it up and running.
12. Electronic communication can be helpful but can also be unreliable and should not be the only form of communication.
13. Concerns regarding the cost of technology.
14. When we went to FullCourt, our county commissioners refused to fund the hardware, so we had to take money from other sources to buy it. There is a cost to technology that needs to be considered.
15. Why is the BRC out here? Because they want to see people, they want to talk to people. The same is true for the public - they want to see a judge face to face.
16. E-filing works but still need access to a local person.
17. Counties have a hard time keeping technology updated and maintained. There are no funds for doing that.
18. Lack of computers could limit access to justice if e-filing is mandated.
19. Have tried using video conferencing for juvenile hearings but have found it to be unreliable.
20. Technology is very expensive, need to factor in how to pay for keeping it up and running.
21. You lose touch with the public when there is no face to face contact.

22. The judge needs to see the person in court to judge credibility and evaluate testimony.
23. There is a difference between appearing in court personally or over a camera. There is a stronger impact when the person appears personally before the judge, especially with juveniles.
24. Trials should be held in person. The judge needs to see the witnesses and parties in person to evaluate body language.
25. Re technology and e-filing: finding all the criminal case files electronically could be difficult - now hard copies are in front of the judge. The non-technically savvy (many judges) will have problems in particular.
26. Technology in rural areas is a problem as there is no direct IT staff.
27. E-filing in small rural settings may not necessarily be a plus.
28. Re e-filing, the public (pro se's) does not always have computers or know how to use them.
29. Federal e-filing did drive out older attorneys who were not technically savvy.
30. It's almost impossible now to find a judge who is readily available; how would that work with e-filing?
31. E-filing could be good, but often judges require paper - that could involve more work.
32. Re: a paperless environment: what would happen if the e-system went down - will two systems really be needed?
33. Re electronic hearings of any type: indigents typically do not have any forms of electronic communications, and the presence of a defense attorney is not enough.
34. Pro se's will always be frustrated.
35. Judges like paper.
36. With a jury trial, all should appear in person.
37. Watching live testimony is far better than just hearing or reading it.
38. Pro se's will have difficulty with e-filing, and pro se cases are increasing. Some manual filings might be necessary.
39. Clerks spend a great deal of time assisting people with the courthouse computers now.
40. Many persons within the court system were challenged already with written material, and would not be able to use computers.
41. Very simple written instructions might help with the use of computers. But foreign languages will be a problem also.
42. Jury trials needed to be open and in person.
43. All court hearings should be in person, even first appearances for misdemeanors.
44. Video does not solve any problems.
45. Prison inmates at times become litigation mills - a bigger problem with e-filing.
46. Current remote access to FullCourt servers in other counties is difficult.
47. Technology is expensive and the cost must be considered.

48. Video conferencing does not work as well as meeting face to face.
49. Technology is not optimal for reading facial expressions.
50. Difficult for older people to shift to new technology.
51. Concern expressed over holding trials by videoconference.
52. You have to have the knowledge to use the technology.
53. I do not feel like I can effectively communicate through a machine.
54. One loses a sense of access to justice when one has to communicate through a machine.
55. We currently have a videoconference system, and I hate it.
56. There is no time to talk to client.
57. You cannot tell by looking at a monitor if the person is pregnant or lost a foot.
58. I am concerned about our courts becoming impersonal and detached.
59. I feel technology has passed me by.
60. Where will the funding for technology come from?
61. The state did not fund the attorney's companion version to FullCourt.
62. It could be dangerous to set domestic violence bonds by phone.
63. Some older attorneys do not know how to use computers.
64. The problem with technology is funding; not sure that counties could come up with more funding.
65. Some people use computers at the public library while some do not.
66. Not convinced that technology could be applied to small claims, pro se, and protection from abuse and protection from stalking cases.
67. Technology would be a problem for pro se litigants.
68. Many people don't have access to computers.
69. There is a presumption that defendants can confront their accuser face to face.
70. Videoconferencing can make it difficult for a client to interact with their attorney privately.
71. One person is concerned about the thought of replacing court reporters with recordings and transcriptionists.
72. A lot of time is spent trying to get the equipment to record properly.
73. There have been times when videoconferencing didn't work and the recording device did not work.
74. There are also confidential issues. If a client is 6 inches away from a microphone, they may be recorded speaking to their lawyer, and anyone can listen to recording.
75. People may speak over each other on a recording.
76. It is difficult to get a good record of a trial when using an electrical recording device when someone mumbles or talks over another person.
77. There are issues with the quality of technology.
78. Phone calls or Skype calls can drop out.
79. If the attorney and defendant want to have a private conversation will everyone need to leave the courtroom so that client can talk to attorney?

80. Videoconferencing is horrible when it does not work.
81. It can be difficult to tell if the person on the other end of a videoconference call understands the content of what is said.
82. Judges do not have the ability to ask questions when forms are faxed.
83. There is a difference between meeting in person and by video.
84. Elderly people don't know how to use computers.
85. E-filing might limit access to justice because there are people who are not computer literate.
86. Concerned with the security of technology.
87. Actual presence of judge and court staff during PFA or PFS during hearing reduces the risk to the victim and can increase the victim's confidence and ability to speak about the violence and fear.
88. Concerned that trust between interpreter and client would be lost if interpreter is in different location than judge or client.
89. Concern with "swearing in" witness with video arraignment because of the belief that the witness had to personally be in front of the person being sworn to have valid oath.
90. Video conferencing for PFA and PFS cases would not be a good idea.
91. Does not believe video conferencing should be performed at critical stages (preliminary hearing, trial and sentencing) of any criminal proceeding because the defendant has the right to face their accuser.
92. There is a growing pro se phenomenon in the court's work – these folks generally have lower level technology skills. He recommends the Commission look at the pro se judicial council forms; there are links on the KLS website to forms. Whatever technologies are used at this point to increase efficiency need to be more user-friendly. It's hard enough to be pro se now; if the courts go to e-filing, it becomes substantially harder. Ex.: people don't know what "What is your jurisdiction?" means. Would it be cost-effective to use funds to make better forms?
93. Some statutes require an in-person hearing.
94. Sometimes the quickness of electronic communication doesn't allow for cooling down – like the slowness of mail does.
95. Security can become an issue if prisoners are taken to a centralized place (such as a video conferencing facility shared by two or more counties).
96. If video conferencing is used for domestic violence hearings, the perpetrator will have the edge.
97. You cannot get the same personal connection using Skype and e-mails that can be achieved by providing services in person.
98. While technology may work for routine cases, sometimes you need to see a witness in person to see if they are telling the truth.
99. There is an expense involved in technology, because local attorneys also need to have the technology to make it work.

100. Self represented litigants present an issue, because they likely will not have technology available to them.

d. Other

1. FullCourt should be required to be used by all courts to ensure consistency and accessibility.
2. An automated call system to remind defendants/respondents of upcoming hearings may help reduce failures to appear.
3. Cameras and better acoustics in the courtrooms are necessary to hear all individuals, including jurors.

3. How can the courts become more flexible in the use of people and facilities as workloads and funding fluctuate?

a. Consolidate/Share

1. Consolidate districts (but beware - judges would have a heavier caseload; travel involved might prevent cases from being heard timely; need to avoid judge shopping).
2. Have judges from other districts hear cases.
3. Share personnel across county lines; have better and increased use of technology.
4. Consolidation of services with neighboring counties should be counties' choices.
5. Other judges call and can be called to cover cases; the Supreme Court has given them standing orders to allow this. Same with clerks; personnel is shared within the district.
6. Pure consolidation of districts without elimination of judicial sites is not an answer because of judge travel and minimum staffing needs.
7. Create a pool of court reporters and interpreters that could be used by multiple districts.
8. There is a need for a centralized IT department that would be available for all districts to utilize. They would help the districts with purchasing, repairing equipment, and implementation of new technology.
9. Consolidation of cases under one judge needs to occur in all family situations – custody, CINC, divorce, etc. - all cases relating to a particular family should be given to one judge.
10. Civil commitments need to be looked at – these should be able to move between courts or should use local courts of commitment for some hearings and certain portions of trials, rather than exclusively using courts where the original cases were filed.
11. The Supreme Court needs to have the ability to move staff and judges around – all or relatively all are now legislatively mandated. That needs to change.

12. Difficulties with having certain judges elected and others appointed complicates that process possibility.
13. Some counties have (and need) 2 courthouses, and the courthouses are provided to the Judicial Branch by the counties at virtually no cost, and with county-paid staff that help the courts.
14. Consolidation will not necessarily save any money, and could cost money through re-modeling, travel, etc.
15. Courthouse closings do not have to happen with consolidation.
16. A benefit of consolidation of districts could be the ability of judges to specialize, as happens in the urban districts. This is a terrific up-side.
17. The Court was wise in trying to get ahead of the legislative thrust to consolidate.
18. Supervision of and revenue from Municipal Courts should be moved under the supervision and control of the Supreme Court.
19. With any redistricting, consideration has to be given to jail locations, costs of and who pays for redistricting, possibilities for regional & statewide judicial activities, and what happens to the bonded indebtedness of facilities closed as a result.
20. Caseloads do not justify the number of judges in each district; they should be used in other districts also.
21. Consolidation will only increase travel costs.
22. Larger judicial districts have to become more efficient - cut all positions.
23. If some courts are closed, the additional workload would be placed on the remaining courts that already have high workloads.
24. Transportation of prisoners is expensive.
25. Increased travel will create a problem for access to courts.
26. The Governor declared western Kansas counties as economic development sites. Any consolidation or centralization needs to take this into account and help create jobs in these western counties.
27. Security at courthouses is expensive.
28. Changes resulting in increased local expenses need to be reviewed.
29. Additional travel will not be efficient for judges or attorneys.
30. There is a sense of community when a judge lives in a local community.
31. Access to justice is important when making these types of changes.
32. Venue issues with various case types is a problem with consolidation.
33. The 15 Court Trustees offices could be consolidated more.
34. The Court Trustees office would like to get into assisting the court in handling the paperwork for uncontested child custody and failure to pay child support.
35. A clerk could help with the work of another county, but someone would have to scan the documents into FullCourt.
36. There is not uniformity in procedures across courts.
37. Hope the National Center for State Courts does not recommend consolidation.

38. Could reallocate some bodies across the judicial districts on a temporary basis.
39. Five counties have two courthouses.
40. If the courts are consolidated, new buildings will have to be built resulting in no savings.
41. Court reporters are doing nothing between trials.
42. There should be a pool of transcriptionists for the whole state to use to transcribe all recordings.
43. If we made the districts larger, there would be one court administrator instead of two or three.
44. If consolidation is recommended, let it be a local decision and not mandated.
45. It is important for the court administrator not to forget the needs of the smaller counties in the district.
46. If we can be more efficient through technology, there is the thought that not as many employees will be needed, so people will be taken from us.
47. If we have one clerk in a county, what are we going to do when they are sick or gone?
48. District Magistrate Judges in western Kansas are willing to help eastern counties through technology if they are in a pinch.
49. If the courts are consolidated, there is no way for the clerks in Ford County to take on all the workload.
50. Consolidation of districts is fraught with problems and the concerns of dealing with multiple county commissions.
51. Consolidation is not necessarily a bad thing, but to people with low incomes, distance is a barrier to justice. Divorce hearings, protection from abuse hearings that require great travel distance, can prevent justice.
52. One mentioned there was going to be a centralized records system in Topeka that would allow anyone to look at anything anywhere in the state, but hasn't heard more about this.
53. Access to the courts is not just access to the paper. Consolidation of districts could leave out the people of this district – if the people from this district had to go to Sedgwick, Johnson, or Lyon counties for a courthouse, it would cut them off. There's no public transportation; a lot of people who need the court system don't have cars here. A judge knew of a man who walked from Oswego to Parsons (10 miles one way) to get to his court hearing.
54. The Commission should remember that it's hard to have centralization when there isn't centralized funding: salaries are paid by state, but everything else is paid for by the county.
55. Some two per county courthouses aren't big enough to hold all county offices.
56. Consolidation from the '70's was only half done: originally, the state was supposed to fund everything, but it only funds salaries.
57. Each district has to find its own IT people. If he has problems with FullCourt, they call a private vendor paid for by the county to help it – they don't call

the state. Without a centralized budget, all improvements will be done piecemeal.

b. District Magistrate Judges (DMJs) & District Court Judges(DJs)

1. Expand power of magistrates; that would free up more of the DJ's time.
2. Have DMJ in courthouse only certain days/week and in other counties the other days.
3. Expand role of district magistrate judges so they could handle additional case types, e.g., non-contested paternity cases.
4. Counties could pay to keep a DMJ.
5. Consider using rural DMJ's to help out urban DJ's.
6. The cost for a district judge and his/her staff should be considered in determining whether a DMJ could be used in place of a district judge; this could result in a tremendous savings.
7. Change the jurisdiction requirements for DMJs in some circumstances.
8. The DMJ is the face of what we do here (in several western counties). We need to cater to the least sophisticated citizen.
9. It is very important, critical, and vital to have access to DMJs when dealing with obtaining warrants and CINC cases.
10. Family Crisis Services serves 7 counties, uses DMJs a lot for protection from abuse and protection from stalking orders. Some smaller counties don't have a safe house so they have to transfer to Garden City and file the paper work the next day. Communities must have access to the DMJ in each county.
11. DMJs should continue – are available for emergency hearings/issues.
12. A DMJ gives a smaller community a sense of identity. People recognize a DMJ as "my judge." Most people know who their judges because they see them; they are a known entity. A judge gives his/her community a sense of society, structure.
13. DMJs authorize search warrants, protection from abuse orders, and are available to community.
14. Law-trained DMJs are very good.
15. Re law-trained DMJs only, we want the best person to be the judge, law-trained or not.
16. Sedgwick County should be reviewed to see if some of their district judges could be replaced with district magistrate judges. DMJs can handle a heavy workload; they are very valuable. In some areas, district judges are doing the same things as some magistrate judges.
17. Local DMJs are very well qualified.
18. Utilize DMJs more by allowing them to go to other districts to help out where caseloads are larger. Instead of increasing judge positions, use judges we have.
19. Cut costs by having more DMJs in the eastern side of the state.

20. Scaling back District Judges in smaller districts would be a mistake as there are more likely to be conflicts and those conflicts will be more severe than those in metropolitan areas.
21. Need to leave the DMJs in western Kansas and allow them to help with hearings and appearances in other counties.
22. Need to make better use of our DMJs.
23. Each county needs a DMJ.
24. Consider part-time judge positions.
25. Change DMJ employment from the state to the counties.
26. Don't want part-time judges; won't get well-qualified part-time people.
27. Have clerks handle first appearances. Court clerks can schedule a hearing date for defendants and judges need not be involved at all.
28. DMJs don't have the law training to handle cases they don't currently hear.
29. Pay law trained DMJs more money.
30. The 15th Judicial District could do with a District Judge in Sherman County, a District Judge in Thomas County, and one law-trained DMJ. Everyone would be within one hour of a judge.
31. Retention should be the way to select judges -- not elective. An elected judiciary depends on politics and pandering to the public.
32. Retention districts are better; elective judges are punished for unpopular decisions and can be less willing to administer justice in a fair and impartial way, especially in an election year.
33. There is a way to get rid of bad judges.
34. Senate confirmation of judicial nominees was roundly shot down. The confirmation system is already in place in the form of the local nomination committee; nominations committees are made up of trusted, respected, impressively credentialed members of the communities; don't take it to Topeka where it would be politicized.
35. Judicial selection shouldn't be politicized.
36. The biggest problem is the legislature taking away judicial discretion/local input in these districts. DMJs make 1/2 the salary of DJs.
37. It's been heard that elected districts are hesitant to use magistrates because having magistrates in an elected district is like training your competition.
38. It doesn't make sense that judges have to ask for campaign contributions from folks who will appear in front of them; politics should play as minimal a part as possible in the courts. How could campaign contributions not influence a sitting judge. Standing for retention is scary enough; standing for election, when you probably took a salary cut to take the position in the first place, is really scary.
39. We use DMJs here; some have law degrees, some don't. We have very good DMJs in this district. Other districts that don't use DMJs should consider using them.
40. He has practiced in both types of districts: elected and retention. The retention system is better. Montgomery Co. has elected judges. He charges

clients more for cases in Montgomery Co. because it will be harder to try cases there. You get "home-towned" there; judges make preferential decisions for the home town attorneys. The bar there is much less civil than in the retention districts. It is harder to get continuity in elected districts because the judges change frequently; it creates bad experiences and bad law.

41. The bar will usually say that they favor retention; the public will usually say that they prefer elections.
42. Public outcry for public interviews for judges; but no one came. It's similar to this meeting tonight.
43. Kansas Commission on Judicial Performance sends out questionnaires to those who have used the court system. Results are put on the website.
44. It is difficult to share judges since some of the districts elect judges while others have appointed judges. If you asked elected judges to drive to another district to help, you are asking them to serve people they didn't run for office in front of.
45. Judges in western Kansas may not handle as many cases but their travel time can be extensive.
46. We need both magistrate and district judges.
47. All appointed judges would allow for more flexibility.
48. We don't want judges to have to travel farther than they already are.
49. Utilize the magistrate judges more.
50. Magistrate judges do not have AA's and court reporters like district judges do.
51. Chief Judge in Elkhart does not have a fulltime AA or court reporter. When judges are working there, they share an office.
52. When judges travel, that leaves a court without their judge.
53. Magistrate judges are a good value. Would advocate the use of magistrate judges to be mandatory. In some districts, that could reduce the number of district judges needed.
54. Advocate additional salary for law-trained magistrates.
55. Law trained magistrate judges should be allowed to hear cases beyond their jurisdiction when directly assigned to them by the Chief Judge.
56. It would increase efficiencies if trial court judges had a law clerk or legal assistant.
57. If there is a capital crime case assigned to a judge, OJA should assign a law clerk to that judge to utilize.
58. Nonlawyer DMJs don't know the law so they really can't do things well. But, in some cases where a narrow focus was necessary, a non-law trained judge with required technical expertise could be okay. But there are some standards necessary.
59. Retention elections provide the ability to remove a judge. Judges seem to be more accountable when they are elected in partisan races, but fund-raising caused imbalances in partisan races.

60. The public doesn't really know what judges do. They react only to a few high profile opinions or cases.
61. Partisan elections are not the best ways to select judges.
62. Partisan elected judges are better than appointed judges - it's easier to affect the appointment system's players than it is to affect the elected system's players.
63. District magistrate judges (DMJs) should be used more, e.g., in limited actions, with all restrictions lifted if they were law-trained, but with continued restrictions if not.
64. DMJs are crucial to access to justice.
65. The first access to justice is typically thru a DMJ. They are closer than district judges to those entering the court system.
66. Even if not law-trained, DMJs can handle simpler cases and activities.
67. The Supreme Court needs to have the ability to move judges around – all or relatively all are now legislatively mandated. That needs to change. Difficulties with having certain judges elected and others appointed complicate that process possibility.
68. In elected districts, judges often think they are training their next opponents when they train DMJs.
69. Some think of DMJs are “not real judges” because they often are not law-trained, their decisions are automatically appealable, and often are not used in the urban districts.
70. The entire state should have one selection method for judges.
71. Elected judges know a single decision, even when they strictly follow the law, can haunt them at the next election.
72. An attendee stated he never saw a judge defeated for following the law.
73. A particular district should never have both judge-selection methods.
74. All DMJs should be law-trained, although some non-law-trained DMJs might be usable in areas requiring selective expertise they might have.
75. Statewide consistency is needed in selecting/appointing all judges.
76. Use DMJs instead of DJs.
77. It is important to have DMJs available for emergencies.
78. Expand power of magistrates, (they are not currently courts of record).
79. Appeals from magistrates to district judges are a problem. Things should not be tried twice.
80. Dollar for dollar, DMJ's are the best value for the money.
81. Changing some of the DJ's to DMJ's in the urban courts would save money.
82. Judges should not be inundated with so many cases so that they cannot take the time to make a good decision.
83. Judges should be available whenever the need arises and not based on caseload.
84. District Magistrate Judges should not be judged on their caseloads.
85. District Magistrate Judges carry so much of the workload.
86. Law trained district magistrate judges could have their jurisdiction expanded.

87. One judge is not opposed to taking on additional territory.
88. Districts should not mix elected judges with appointed judges.
89. Every county should have a judge regardless of workload because that is what was promised when they unified the courts.
90. District magistrate judges are underused.
91. District magistrate judges often travel to larger counties which result in travel costs.
92. Why do we have some districts with no magistrate judges?
93. It seems like people in eastern Kansas don't know what District Magistrate Judges do.
94. One cannot substitute one district judge for five District Magistrate Judges as it is not same amount of work.
95. It is already difficult for Protection from Abuse cases to be seen in person because our District Magistrate Judge is out of the county a few days a week.
96. If District Magistrate Judges were not in the local courts, children in Child in Need of Care cases would have to wait in foster care.
97. Scheduling a case with a district judge can take a long time.
98. District Magistrate Judges have a heavy load.
99. Johnson County has District Judges hearing cases that our District Magistrate Judges hear for a much lower salary.
100. If there is going to be consolidation, I wouldn't cry one tear for giving up the election of judges.
101. We give up some accountability when one switches from elected to appointed judges.
102. Changing from an elected to an appointed system for judges would have to come up before the voters
103. All judges should be law-trained.
104. All urban judges should be district court judges.
105. There is a disparity of pay between urban judges and district attorneys.
106. Judges should not be elected and the merit selection process should be kept.
107. Magistrates can handle lots of things that district judges now handle.
108. Don't let the judges off the hook; part of the judge's job is helping people get through a situation.
109. In the urban areas, district judges are hearing juvenile and other types of cases that district magistrate judges could hear. There could be tremendous economic savings in the urban areas if district magistrate judges were used.
110. The focus needs to be on the efficiency of the urban counties.
111. Every urban district should have at least 60 percent district magistrate judges.
112. With regionalization, attorneys would tend to congregate in the cities or counties in which the courthouse is located, and would not be spread throughout the district.

113. We owe it to the accused, particularly those who are innocent, to be able to get a judge in the middle of the night, if necessary.

c. Other

1. "Cattle call" dockets for limited action, criminal first appearance, traffic, and juvenile first appearance cases.
2. Change statute on which cases can be heard "without a record" vs "on the record."
3. The county commission could offer community service projects for defendants who can't pay their fines.
4. One area has only one court reporter for the district (due to not being able to get one; they don't make enough money). There are no court reporter training schools in the state.
5. The district court clerk keeps a list of interpreters; they pay a daily amount. Not generally a big issue here. Staff vacancies have generally been filled without an inordinate wait time.
6. There is no one resolution that will work in all 105 counties. "Broad" solutions may not work across this state; we have unique situations in our localities. We need to look at the unique requirements of our local situations. The caution is that every system has a point of no return – pushing/cutting too far/much will have repercussions, *i.e.*, increased crime.
7. Poverty in this area is a predominant issue, a real consideration: not having a car to get to hearings, no public transportation. One attorney has clients who walk to Chanute to make meetings. He has clients who remain married, although completely out of touch, because they don't have the money for a divorce.
8. After 3 years, a person can have his/her record expunged. The \$115 filing fee is often prohibitive. Filing fee must be paid for each case. Poverty affidavit can be filed in the 31st. 11th has a local rule that no attorney fees will be paid before court costs are paid; this tends to limit the filing of poverty affidavits.
9. They used to have a staff member sit in on court hearing to make sure the recorder was working, but they don't have enough staff to do that now.
10. Retired judges that come in and help were one of the first things cut. It is cheaper to use a retired judge than to have a district judge travel. If there are no judges available to fill in, then the clerks have to reschedule all the cases that were to be heard that day. That could be 40 – 60 cases in one docket.
11. Time management in the courts is a widespread problem. Attorneys, prosecutors, and police, etc., are often confronted with different judges holding court sessions at the same time with the same parties. Judges forget real world time - they often show up and start sessions late, increasing the costs for the other parties. They seem to be non-cognizant of the time of

others. The message that needs to be sent to attorneys and judges is that everyone needs to BE ON TIME. If there is no change things will be inefficient.

12. We don't have unlimited resources to hold all hearings face to face.
13. Have a truancy court held at the high school; it does not cost anything to set up.
14. There has to be greater cooperation between the state and counties.
15. If a judge runs unopposed for two terms, could not we say he is ineligible due to monopoly of power?
16. The chief judge position should rotate among the judges in a district.
17. Specialty courts like, such as veteran, family or drug, should be looked into.
18. Suggested a benefit to judges having access to opinions of other district judges that do not necessarily go through the Appellate Court.
19. Consolidating juvenile court services supervision under the authority of JJA.
20. Centralization could be used on the local level such as Sedgwick County's centralized dockets; they are great, very productive, highly successful. Highly complex cases can be permanently assigned to a specific judge; but other cases are not. Courtrooms there are always full; motions are quick to be heard. Centralization in rural counties may require some travel.
21. A motions day should be held every 10 days so that people can get their issues heard very quickly – as opposed to having people wait weeks / months.
22. Uniform practices are helpful, but this state is very large; allowing flexibility to meet the local needs is important.
23. The makeup of judicial districts is going to change. We can either take part in developing that plan, or we can have the Legislative Post Audit plan put into place.
24. We need to look outside the box for ways to do more with less.

4. What other ideas, issues, or concerns do you want the BRC to consider?

- a. **Access to Justice/Timeliness**
 1. If we consolidate courts we may not have speedy trials, other things won't be accomplished in a timely matter, workload and expenses would go up.
 2. Concerned with being able to process cases in a timely manner.
 3. Government is saying please come to western KS, but don't expect any services here.
 4. If the courthouse is closed it will be hard on sheriffs' departments as they would have to transport prisoners to hearings.
 5. Concern for elderly populations - difficult time traveling and using technology.
 6. People don't have a computer or don't know how to use them.

7. People walk to courthouse, e.g., for PFAs, and have no transportation to other towns.
8. Currently a small business owner who files a lot of Limited Actions and can be to the courthouse in 15 minutes - wouldn't be able to do that if he/she had to go the next county which might cut down on some of the filings.
9. If courts regionalize, it could be difficult as a court employee to work with someone else on cases that are time sensitive.
10. Whatever plans are developed, access to justice should be the priority.
11. We are destroying customer service.
12. Make sure cases are processed in a timely manner.
13. It takes a 3 hour drive from some locations to get to juvenile detention center.
14. SRS went through consolidation a while ago, & people who need services aren't getting them - when they took those local people out, the services went too.
15. Greater efficiency does not necessarily mean better access to justice.
16. SRS pulled workers from her area and feels that the recipients of SRS services are suffering by not having SRS employees in the area.
17. Can't put a price on due process, equal protection of the laws, and access to justice.
18. Travel to other counties to get a bad check prosecuted is inefficient.
19. Centralization is not an option. As long as it's legal to live in the small counties, these citizens should have access to justice.
20. The citizens of small counties should have the same access to justice as the citizens of the large counties.
21. Impact of different time zones on judicial districts must be considered.
22. Access to justice is the big issue. The courts, as well as 636 cities, 308 school districts, 99 non-urban counties, are all under fire in limiting costs/budgets.
23. Kansas has a good court system. We must preserve access to justice by keeping one judge per county. The judiciary should not be about finance or money; it's about justice.
24. We're a branch of government, not an agency. Closed courts mean the people suffer.
25. Keep DJs and DMJs as we have them. The easiest thing to do is do away with courts in western KS, but it affects thousands of people. Cuts may start with the courts, but will spread to other county services, schools.
26. A domestic violence case deserves to have immediate access to judge. We're all Kansas people; we all deserve access to justice. The only reason not to have access to justice is political expediency.
27. Some meetings like this will fall on deaf ears; it's a little like fighting for our way of life here, for justice. It is essential to access to justice and the judicial system in Kansas that it not be centralized in a few hands in Topeka. SRS tried a centralized system and it didn't work.

28. There are no services for juvenile in many locations; SRS has centralized them.
29. Domestic and sexual assault victims rely heavily on DMJs; immediate access to the court is critical.
30. Removing judges from our rural areas will increase lawlessness and create a lack of access to justice.
31. If courts are closed and attorneys have to travel, there will be increased travel costs that are passed on to the client. Some cannot afford to pay that cost.
32. Just because you live in a remote area does not mean that your case is less important. Shouldn't have to travel a great distance to have your case heard.
33. Closing courthouses will end up costing the people in western Kansas more money and reduce their access to justice.
34. Clients will not use the court system if we throw up barriers that they can't afford, like spending a half-day traveling for a court case; their employers can't afford to have them gone.
35. As a small business owner with a small claims action, the cost incurred to get the money owed me would not be worth the time/expense if I had to travel.
36. Need to consider the effect on lower socio-economic people in the community. If they don't have a car or a local judge, how will they get a protection order?
37. More than half of the citizens in Wallace County are Medicare-eligible and 12% are Medicaid-eligible. The extra travel costs would make it much more difficult for those people to access justice.
38. There is a need for legal services in our communities.
39. If we lose our courts in our communities we will also lose the young attorneys.
40. Seward County is ranked 3rd in the state for the highest percentage of kids receiving free and reduced lunches. Means that poverty is currently an issue in our community. If people don't have access to local courts for protection orders or limited civil claims, then access to justice is reduced. Also a public safety issue.
41. We want the courts accessible to us in our communities.
42. Access to justice is necessary in order to provide safety for our clients that are victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.
43. The people of western Kansas should not have to travel long distances to have access to the courts.
44. Access to the courts is a fundamental right for any citizen.
45. Certain cases, such as appeals from municipal court, need to have an appeal process available. When people have to travel farther, that increases their cost to appeal.
46. The Supreme Court has promoted litigants filing cases without attorneys, such as Protection from Abuse and Protection from Stalking cases. Those are useless programs if there is no judge available to hear the testimony.

47. We pay taxes like everyone else and have a right to access to justice like everyone else.
48. Access to justice is one of the foundations of our constitution. We have a right to have access to the court system and exercise our right for a trial.
49. When cuts occur, hope the Supreme Court is sensitive to their responsibility to shore up southwestern Kansas and make sure that access to justice is maintained.
50. The court system is not a business. Efficiency is not the goal of the court system, justice is. There are embedded inefficiencies with access to justice. No control over whether a case goes to trial or not.
51. Consolidation may save money due to closing courthouses and getting rid of positions/salaries but it creates an access to justice issue.
52. People in small counties have a concern that their court houses will be closed. They have just as much of a right to access justice.
53. Protection orders are critical for victims. Barriers such as driving to another courthouse to get those orders increases risk to our clients.
54. Judges need to be available immediately for warrants, etc. That is not a problem now but if consolidation occurs could be.
55. Bigger districts will result in problems with legal issues involving time constraints - some emergency situations in particular. The bigger the district the worse the problems - the harder it will be for a judge to be available when needed.
56. With fewer courthouses and judges, care and treatment cases with their time requirements will be difficult.
57. As an untrained executrix, the knowledgeable players dominated the court sessions. No one asked anyone if they had anything to say or ask.
58. The courts have to take the work that comes to the courts - we can't turn people away.
59. With continued funding cuts, eventually the courts will be confronted with a situation where they can only do what is required, and not all the things that the courts do now. Eventually the courts will be in a situation where the courts will not even be able to do all the required activities, but will be faced with a situation where they will have to respond by doing only extremely crucial activities.
60. Not all counties can use credit cards, and even if they did, many of the uses of the courts do not have a credit card - they use cash (pro se litigants are a huge efforts on all fronts).
61. We cannot make the judicial system harder to use for the end users. We have to be a service provider. Access to justice is the key.
62. Closing courthouses would deny indigents their constitutional due process rights under the 4th and 16th amendments of the U.S. constitution and under section 10 of the Kansas constitution's Bill of Rights.

63. In FY 2010, public defenders for the state of Kansas handled 13,900 cases, and another 11,000 were handled by assigned counsel, a total of nearly 25,000 cases, for indigent defendants.
64. The Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing organization keeps a registry of signing interpreters for use by the courts. Johnson County uses local interpreters.
65. Interpreters also help educate deaf court attendees.
66. There are a very few non-English interpreters for the hearing/speaking impaired; sometimes 3-way translations are necessary.
67. In 2010, KLS provided legal services to over 20,000 people in Kansas, including 2,000 court actions affirmatively in 92 counties through its 13 offices, mostly civil, but including some criminal cases in certain counties.
68. KLS in civil cases can assist person who meets the legal definition of "poor" or if a victim of domestic violence. KLS can also assist otherwise with the use of forms, the library, etc., but if a true emergency, forms are not enough, and KLS often recommends an attorney because usually a large number of temporary orders might be needed.
69. Proximity of citizens to courthouses and to judges is crucial. Things need to be kept local, regardless of cost.
70. Having to work through problems with administrative agencies is a problem because they are in Topeka, and witnesses etc. are not.
71. With pro se's, judges should try to help by recognizing what they are trying to do and fitting that into the legal requirements of cases.
72. People must feel that the court system functions fairly and effectively – the system makes decisions that affect lives.
73. All arrestees must see a judge quickly.
74. Timeliness is sometimes a problem in smaller counties because there are fewer judges.
75. Court orders are not necessarily followed in the jails.
76. As a pro se, it is difficult to figure out what needs to occur with a court case and there is no one to ask.
77. It is becoming more difficult to bring pro se cases and understand what is going on in court. Not knowing what new processes were needed, and not understanding the language are difficulties.
78. Access to the courts needs to be easy. The appellate process in particular is more difficult, and no one helps at the clerk's office.
79. The system is owned by taxpayers, should be accessible, and forms and processes should be easier.
80. Access to justice must remain paramount.
81. Increases in fees could be limiting access to the courts.
82. Unbundling of attorney services (fees) is occurring and might help pro se's with pieces of what they need in court.
83. Volunteers might be enlisted to help pro se's but cannot give legal advice.
84. SHOULD help be provided to pro se's? If so, HOW MUCH.

85. Pro ses are mistreated in the system – judges should assist them.
86. Court access is a sacred right.
87. Closings will hurt pro ses and the poor disparately.
88. The people have a right to attend and see the courts in action.
89. Open accountable courts are the key.
90. With e-filing and other technologies, the risk is shutting out those without needed technologies.
91. Those in prison have to be provided access to needed technologies.
92. Judges should assist pro se's more.
93. There needs to be a more strict and literal interpretation of constitution provisions, both the US and Kansas - due process, speedy trail, no double jeopardy, trial by jury, etc.
94. Closing courts would make it harder for defendants to make their court dates. This is already difficult.
95. How would closing courts be paid for?
96. Jury expenses would be higher if there are fewer courts.
97. Transportation costs for all parties involved in cases would increase if courts were closed. Many people do not have convenient access to transportation.
98. Access to Justice needs to be considered when making changes.
99. Aging populations are a concern for access to justice.
100. There are access to justice issues when filing fees are raised.
101. It could be a supervision tool if CSOs could impose punishments in a more time sensitive manner.
102. We need access to a judge to have access to justice.
103. Unless people can file in a local county they do not have access to justice.
104. Access to justice is when I can go to my county courthouse and have a judge there.
105. Access to justice is to have access to a judge 5 days a week.
106. It should be equal access for all.
107. People deserve more time if it involves their money or liberty.
108. Please make sure that children aren't being negatively affected so the state can save bucks.
109. There are some computer programs that help pro se litigants fill out court forms by asking them questions in plain language.
110. There should be computer terminals in the courthouse for the public to use.
111. Same services should be available to small and large population centers.
112. It is unfair to defendant if a Skype or phone call drops out in the middle of a proceeding.
113. Concerned with the impact changes to the courts will have on the level of service to the citizens.
114. Defendants would not have a jury of their peers if the jurors are from the other side of the state.
115. A judge needs to see that the defendant understood their rights, and that may be difficult to do through a monitor.

116. The people who request Protection from Abuse are getting the orders later than they would when the request has to be faxed because the judge is working in another county.
117. Some people walk to the courthouse because they do not have cars or a license to drive or car insurance.
118. Are people going to participate in the justice system if getting to the court is a hardship?
119. We are dealing with a branch of government; access to justice is a right.
120. Timeliness of justice has suffered due to be understaffed.
121. Concerned about equal access to justice for everyone.
122. Concerned about victims and survivor's rights in the court.
123. It is very important that victims can get immediate access to protection orders.
124. It is difficult when a judge is not in that county on the day the victim and advocate come in.
125. Access to justice will become an issue because poor people will not be able to get lawyers in distant towns.
126. There would be a lack of legal services available in rural areas.
127. Excessive continuances of juvenile cases are costly.
128. Require evidence based assessments at the pre-disposition stage in juvenile cases.
129. The court system should adopt modern management principles: meaningful access to justice is essential.
130. OJA through Art Thompson, Marilyn Harp, KS Legal Services, Joyce Grover, KCSDV all work on forms.
131. At the last judicial conference, someone spoke about Nebraska's system of court kiosks that help pro se litigants. Alaska has its court houses in the back of the post offices; they have figured out systems where disputes can be handled without courthouses. Hennepin County, Minnesota (Minneapolis) has a model for helping people with legal questions by phone.
132. There is a concern that the forms coming out of these different groups may not be compatible.
133. Pro se litigants don't know that some forms are worthless – they have to have the right forms. A clerk spends a lot of time with pro se litigants. We have to be careful about forms: just because someone has a form doesn't mean they have the right form or that they know the process of what to do with the form.
134. Telling pro se folks that they need a lawyer causes them to say, I can't. A clerk can see a problem with a kiosk-type of situation: she sees someone getting mad at their neighbors and filing a PFA against the whole block. Maybe we need more education to help people learn legal processes.
135. Kansas Legal Services is not allowed to do a child support worksheet without getting involved in custody issues.
136. Kansas Legal Services can help about 60% of the people who apply for help.

137. Mediation can assist efficiencies, could cut back on court time.
138. One local rule requires mediation before a final hearing.
139. Sometimes finding enough mediators is a problem. Only a certain number of people want to do it and are good at it. It's hard to qualify as a mediator in the state. It's hard to get mediators qualified in the state; it takes a lot of hours and money to get certified; it takes a lot of commitment. However, it's money and time well-spent. Not all attorneys are good mediators: attorneys are taught to be bull dogs, mediators aren't. Mediators are not required to be attorneys: social workers and paralegals can be good mediators. It's better to have law-trained mediators, if they spend the time to get trained. It's financially difficult for solo practitioners in rural areas to get certified, considering the time and money it takes. Certification has different requirements for civil and domestic mediation.
140. One judge sends most civil cases to mediation. There's no statistics on how many cases that go to mediation actually settle without court involvement. He thinks this should be left to local rules, not overall requirements.
141. Requiring a mediation report to be filed with the court might tend to be prejudicial. A judge might take it into account if someone didn't show up for mediation.
142. Some cases that seemed resistant to mediation, were still successful because the mediator is good.
143. Access to the courts is not just access to the paper. Consolidation of districts could leave out the people of this district – if the people from this district had to go to Sedgwick, Johnson, or Lyon counties for a courthouse, it would cut them off. There's no public transportation; a lot of people who need the court system don't have cars here. A judge knew of a man who walked from Oswego to Parsons (10 miles one way) to get to his court hearing.
144. There is a real concern about access to justice in rural areas. How far can we ask low income persons involved in child in need or care or protection from abuse cases to drive?
145. How efficient can a system be if it requires people to drive a lot more?
146. K.S.A. 20-301b (which requires one judge per county) is all about access.
147. District court system works well because you don't need immediate access to district judges, but the magistrates that you do need immediate access to are located in the counties.
148. What would happen if PFAs were inaccessible to the public?
149. Unemployment also affects access to justice. With the child support docket, they have to constantly deal with unemployed persons to make sure that they are looking for work. If the court is even further away, there will be problems with people who are unable to appear. Bench warrants will be issued, and the sheriffs will have to go get people.

b. Process changes

1. Simplify court processes to make them better.
2. Get rid of frivolous lawsuits.
3. Not all judges do things the same way.
4. Any changes Implemented should be done uniformly throughout the state.
5. Cases should not go to trial until they have been through a mediation process.
6. Increased docket fees can limit the access to justice; if filing a case becomes too expensive, justice can become inaccessible. If fewer cases are filed, the court system gets less money. Increasing the docket fees will increase the number of poverty affidavits that will be filed. The local rule in the 11th district regarding poverty affidavits will increase the number of pro se filed divorces.
7. Docket fees are too high and some people can't afford it.
8. Increasing docket fees would increase the filing of poverty affidavits.
9. We must have access to justice for protection from abuse orders – many of these clients have no cars, walk to the courthouse, they end up in a shelter. He anticipates 20 of these cases on next Tuesday's docket. It's not just one trip to the courthouse; most of the cases require multiple trips to the courthouse. Transportation, babysitting costs also have to be considered.
10. Parties can file a poverty affidavit and then be able to file their divorce.
11. Some child support goes uncollected because some people don't know the enforcement services are available; some suffer from the "this is the way it's been done for generations" mentality. These kinds of services should be covered in a required high school class.
12. CASA is funded by the courts. CASA advocates are lay help from the communities. They have to access court documents. If we went to regional courts, it would be harder to recruit local advocates because of travel. She also reports back to courts in other districts for foster kids placed in her district.
13. We're pretty lucky here in the 31st because of accessibility to the judges. If there is delay here, it's not the fault of the courts. Usually when the parties are ready, the courts are ready. We wouldn't want to lose that.
14. Change the first appearance process to where the party appears in front of the clerk and fills out paperwork as to whether they plead guilty or not. If they request a trial, then it goes in front of a judge.
15. Find a way to cheaply resolve disputes before a district judge is needed, possibly through mediation.
16. Expedited appeals process for sentencing guideline cases. If the sentencing guidelines have been complied with, the sentence should not be appealable. Create a screening methodology that takes place for these types of appeals before they get to the appellate court.

17. Contract attorneys (e.g., CINC/JOs) should have more contact with the prosecutor's office locally, and should have higher fees paid for their services.
18. CINC cases needed to be sped up. SRS regulations that require timeliness should be universally followed (sometimes they are selectively applied), the CINC laws needed changing, adoptions needed to be simplified and sped up, especially when a child is in state custody. Parents are given too many chances to improve their behavior. Things should not be drug out, especially after TPR.
19. There is a natural reluctance by the state to terminate parental rights.
20. Get the parties together before trial and explain things. They'll then settle. This could cut judges' loads.
21. Universal mediation BEFORE going to trial, like the "early assessment" process in federal courts, should be implemented.
22. Judges should encourage mediation with civil cases.
23. Judges should explain how expensive cases will be if they go to trial, and attorneys should do the same.
24. Mediation should be more widely used in the courts.
25. Community organizations can be used to provide some mediation services at reduced costs.
26. Local public oversight boards to assure transparency and accountability should be implemented.
27. Court standards (e.g., re postponements) need to be set and enforced.
28. Resolution information coming from the office of disciplinary administrator and the judicial review board in Topeka never seems to contain any information or reasons for non-actions. Detailed reasons for non-actions need to be given.
29. Longer sentences can help reduce recidivism concerns. The Attorney General of Kansas should be able to investigate and file charges anywhere.
30. Districts should consolidate, similar to school district consolidations.
31. Judges should have greater leeway in sentencing – guidelines should be just guidelines.
32. Drop-boxes at courthouses for late filings should be used.
33. Some criminal offenders should be given the opportunity to serve in the military rather than serve time in prison.
34. Re CINC, TPR, and other case types, some form of local oversight and complaint mechanisms need to be in place.
35. A help center for pro se's should be set up with forms submittable on-line.
36. Large districts should have central staggered dockets to use all judges over extended hours.
37. Mediation should be used everywhere, not an adversary system.
38. Continuances should be stopped or at least severely limited.
39. Case management should be used more under DMJs or non-judge supervisors.

40. Case management does not work and is filled with favoritism.
41. Statute table needs to be consistent across the state. There should only be one statute table used by everyone.
42. One thing that would save money and time would be if line officers (Intensive Supervision Officers, Court Services Officers, etc) had statutory rule authority to apply sanctions greater than they can now.
43. Probationers could receive a 48-hour sanction for failed Urine Analysis, and an extra 48 hours if they challenge it and lose.
44. Offer immediate sanctions in drug court.
45. In other states they have a general sanction court that is not just for drugs.
46. There was a pilot program in Johnson County to have an LSI-R (Level of Service Inventory – Revised) for defendants at all hearings.
47. In civil cases, we do motions that are pointless.
48. It seems like there is a lot of wasted time while serving jury duty.
49. We need to accommodate jurors.
50. It would be great if the court could call a central location, and an interpreter would then be connected to the court electronically.
51. Use interpreters from Kansas State University.
52. There should be a uniform rule on the use of court reporters.
53. One court had pre-trials by phone for civil cases.
54. They should limit what one can appeal from municipal court.
55. Simple theft cases are tried in municipal court.
56. Get rid of trying everything twice.
57. Instead of having one judge hear the preliminary and another judge the trial, it works best when one judge hears it all.
58. One person wishes some cases were automatic bench trials.
59. It would be nice if we had a statewide system where everything is consistent.
60. One person was concerned with the inconsistencies from county to county in courthouse hours of operation.
61. The Court of Appeals should allow people from western Kansas to go straight to Topeka or Wichita instead of Johnson County.
62. The Court of Appeals should schedule cases from western Kansas in the afternoon instead of at 9:00 AM, so we would not have to spend the night at a motel.
63. The Supreme Court should schedule more in advance.
64. Protection from Abuse orders can be delayed when they have to be faxed to the judge in a neighboring county.
65. Wondered how much good they were doing by having juvenile offender hearings in a cattle call format.
66. Put archived data on microfiche or online.
67. Mediations help some.
68. Good scheduling helps so that people are not waiting around.
69. Everything we have is on computer; every document is imaged.

70. We have our backup system offsite. We have microfiche in the salt mines in Hutchinson.
71. Having every document imaged helps when making copies.
72. It would help if the forms for domestic abuse cases were in a fillable pdf format and if those forms were available in Spanish.
73. Believes an appearance fee should be made available in advance to defendants appearing in court as they do not always have funds available to get to court. Those fees could then be assessed at the conclusion of the case.
74. Before changing processes for PFA and PFS cases, please consider the safety of the victims and the accountability of the alleged perpetrators.

c. Money/Vacancies

1. Counties are full of unfunded mandates.
2. Closing the courthouse would be taking jobs away from the community including jobs which support the courts.
3. Any models of court costs should include county expenses.
4. Some of the courts' expenses are funded by counties, so funds cut should go to them.
5. County budgets just don't have the money to adopt all of these new technologies.
6. If we close courts then we remove families from western counties, which contradicts the Governor's tax breaks to move families out here.
7. Gov. Brownback's Rural Opportunity Zone program would be inconsistent with closing courts in western Kansas.
8. The Governor has a program to attract people to western Kansas with tax incentives. Why spend money to get people out here then pull services?
9. Staffing is a constant battle. The Supreme Court should do it like the Navy – staff a court the way a ship would be staffed – if they have a ship, it's properly staffed.
10. Professors and superintendents of schools make more than judges.
11. Sedgwick Co. operates at a much higher cost level than Johnson Co. To increase efficiency, look at where the money is being spent. Sedgwick Co. doesn't use DMJs.
12. Our courts are working on a skeleton staff right now. If you want to save money, look at where it is being spent.
13. Limiting the number of courts will not bring about enough savings.
14. A number of judges in this district have unfunded vacancies in essential positions. We're still not operating efficiently yet.
15. How does the legislature think that they can balance the budget on the backs of the judiciary, when the judicial budget is only 2% of the entire budget?
16. Transporting prisoners is very expensive.
17. Courts take in funds through clerks offices that should go into the budget.

18. Finney Co. pays \$500,000 for interpreters; can this expense be paid by someone else?
19. Finney Co. CINC cases have 90 days until hearings because of the heavy caseload. Kids are in foster care during this time. Cost of foster care could be cut down if hearings could be held sooner.
20. Transportation is an issue for some families in Finney Co.; if they could get assistance with transportation, it would be helpful.
21. Victims' attorneys would have to charge travel costs if they have to travel to other counties, due to consolidation of counties.
22. Another consideration is the cost of transporting juries.
23. A small cut from the legislature means personnel cuts.
24. Prof. Chauvin states that other states that closed courthouses found it cost them money, not saved.
25. Based on Prof. Chauvin's report to the BRC, Wyandotte County's cost per capita is higher than Hamilton's.
26. Do not take the docket fee and split it away from the courts.
27. One of the greatest burdens on the court system is the collections cases; raising fees for collections cases could help.
28. Raising docket fees is preferable to closing courts.
29. Concerns with lack of clerk staff; clerks travel to other counties to help cover for other vacancies.
30. Misconception that smaller counties are inflating the judicial budget. Need to make changes in the larger counties where the money is being spent.
31. There is not much money to be saved in western Kansas.
32. Increase court costs. The court costs in Kansas are much lower than many other states around us.
33. If courts are closed, law enforcement will have to travel farther to transport prisoners, which increases the county costs. Increased travel becomes a safety issue for the officers, public, and the prisoner.
34. The state is trying to balance their budget on the counties' backs.
35. We currently have a limited amount of court clerks in each county now, we are working on barebones.
36. If consolidate courts, what about the jurors that have to travel for jury duty?
37. We are worried about losing our jobs. Want to keep the courts open and serve the people of our area.
38. We pay taxes like everyone else and want our services too.
39. Could raise taxes for essential government services.
40. Problem with raising taxes is that sparsely populated counties are very impoverished and the way the agricultural land is valued for property tax purposes, when taxes are raised, the burden is largely on commercial and residential property owners.
41. Raise filing fees. Every time someone files something, they pay a fee. Waivers are available for those that can't afford the fee.
42. Just finished major renovations to add an elevator to the courthouse.

43. Understands the need for the surcharge, but would like to see a stable budget.
44. The use it or lose it policy in state financing is problematic.
45. The judicial branch is a separate branch of government; legislature needs to treat the courts as the stable feature they are. He mentioned the school finance decision: instead of trying to get back against the courts, the legislature should get its own house in order; they are making our budget predictability even harder.
46. Five counties in southeast Kansas have two courthouses per county: change for change sake is not better. Change for the better is good. Closing one of the courthouses in a county doesn't save the state any money; counties pay for the courthouses (physical facilities); the state pays for personnel. The number of clerks is determined by the number of filings, not the number of courthouses. These courthouses only have 1 courtroom in each courthouse. Chanute courthouse is quite small; doesn't have enough space to combine all offices/services in one courthouse.
47. Counties can decide whether to close a courthouse. Three local counties have built new jail facilities, based on their own decisions.
48. DMJs make 1/2 the salary of DJs.
49. There has to be a bottom line amount to fund the judiciary; they are a third branch of government – not an agency; the court needs to stand up to the legislature.
50. The state never followed through with funding the full judicial system as indicated in the '70s.
51. To save money, the state would have to merge counties, not just courthouses.
52. All of the judges in this district travel – they have two counties each. for judges is state paid; mileage for CSOs is county paid.
53. Certain district courts use an income tax refund setoff to collect unpaid fines, etc. This could be done better. It's not cost effective to throw someone in jail for an unpaid court fine.
54. Going to a federal system would be a financial burden to counties and cities.
55. It's not right to shift the financial burden from the state to the counties.
56. Want to make sure we aren't just shifting money and people and resources from western Kansas to the eastern half and then western Kansas ends up paying the consequences.
57. Clerk's offices are working shorthanded due to the hiring freeze. Many times clerks have to travel to other offices to fill in.
58. A hiring freeze will often turn into a firing freeze. Can't get rid of employees that aren't doing their jobs.
59. The county already pays a large portion of expenses for the judicial system. When looking at re-shifting, keep that in mind.
60. Need to make cuts where the money is being spent, not in western Kansas.

61. Counties will be forced to pick up the extra travel expenses of transporting juveniles if courts or judges are eliminated.
62. Let's make sure the cuts are across the board and everyone is carrying their share.
63. Need to look at how the court system can generate more income to be more self-sufficient.
64. The judicial system is expected to operate with less money when the caseload has not decreased, can't do that.
65. Raising filing fees will deny poor people access to the courts. People already feel like they have to have money in order to get justice.
66. Poverty affidavits are too limited. There are lots of people out there that don't meet the guidelines but still can't afford justice. Even if the filing fee is waived, they still have to pay for the other procedures that have to be done.
67. Would prefer raising filing fees to court consolidation.
68. Raising filing fees a small amount could still generate quite a bit of income.
69. Not only are filing fees shockingly lower in Kansas, but so are judicial and non judicial employee's salaries.
70. Require county hospitals, municipalities, and schools to pay the filing fees upfront like everyone else.
71. It is already very difficult and expensive to practice law when you have to travel 60 – 90 miles between courthouses.
72. The court system is not supposed to turn a profit.
73. There was legislation passed to try to get people to come out to western Kansas and the small communities by offering tax breaks. We need our court system. We can't afford to lose more people, resources, and money.
74. It is not efficient to pass on a cost to the people that have to travel.
75. If a court is a long distance away, it will discourage witnesses from coming forward due to the increased travel costs.
76. Chronic underfunding of any program that would enable us to implement technology or new programs is a problem. The courts that have been able to implement technological efficiencies have done so by obtaining resources from the county.
77. The counties pay for supplies and facilities now. The state should not be passing their costs on to the counties. Do not bring unfunded mandates to the counties.
78. Law enforcement must appear in court as witnesses and also transport defendants. If officers are traveling farther, that requires overtime and increased travel costs, which increases the local county costs. Also becomes a public safety issue when officers are not on the street in their own county.
79. We need funding to develop technology that would help us retrieve and maintain information from prior to the FullCourt case management system implementation.

80. Chronic underfunding of other state agencies impacts the judicial system as well. For example, delays due to KBI taking longer to complete testing in the lab.
81. The county pays for the courthouse and operational costs. Having the county pay for e-filing expenses could be a problem.
82. Besides state and county sources of funds for court operations, grants are available but are problematic because of the amount of administrative effort and reporting required.
83. Re accounts receivable tracking: FullCourt does not seem to track Accounts Receivables well. A relatively large amount of money is not being collected.
84. Collection agency contracts typically are entered into because of the large amounts of funds uncollected.
85. Debt set-off was starting to be used for uncollected fees/fines.
86. Some funds are "lost" when repaid because of the collection fees by the collection companies. When collected, funds go to several entities, not just into the state general fund for the courts.
87. The county tries hard to get attorneys and litigants to pay fees and fines, but not always successfully.
88. When there is no juvenile detention facility close by, the county pays \$150 a day to send someone to another location for trials / hearings.
89. Re fees assessed to defendants being collected: they are difficult to collect because many of the defendants have no means to pay. There are systems behind the court operations that track accounts receivable. The courts try hard to collect but often turn to debt collectors.
90. Technology costs are a problem. With technology, lots of training was needed, and there is a high learning curve. Efficiencies are not felt right away. It would be wrong for the court to require e-filing and not fund technology costs that would otherwise have to be covered by the counties. That will force chief judges to have to negotiate with the counties for funds to pay for computers and other technology costs of e-filing.
91. The state pays some court costs, the counties pay some, but dollars collected by the courts do not all go to the courts. Uncollected funds hurt several entities - collected funds go to several entities, not just the courts.
92. When a defendant cannot pay, the defendant cannot just be locked up until he does.
93. The state must fund the courts properly, and not on the backs of somebody making no money or somebody making \$7.50 an hour.
94. The judicial branch is charged with collecting fees - drug and alcohol tests, blood tests, etc., and then those fees go elsewhere.
95. Fees are not paid usually because individuals can't pay them - disabled or indigent or just poor. Collection agencies when they do collect retain a percentage of what's collected. Collection rates are abysmal.
96. With more technology reliance, who will pay for the higher costs required of technology.

97. Court trustees could be asked to get involved with collection, as they do in child support.
98. On the civil side, pro se litigants file a poverty affidavit leading to uncollectible fees. Self-financing of the judicial branch through fines and fees and other assessments cannot work – the "users" can't pay.
99. To correct funding difficulties: a contract with the trustees to collect; collecting could be made a responsibility of the County Attorney.
100. Courts cannot really examine the financial ability of persons to pay - that would be a huge effort for the courts.
101. The legislature has told the judicial branch to collect for other entities - he feels those collections should all go to the judicial branch.
102. Counties provide the home for the courts – the courthouses.
103. Some grant money in Wyandotte County now is used for domestic cases. Often there's a large administrative effort involved in grants because of the reporting required.
104. Appearance funds should be made available to indigent defendants.
105. BIDS gets funding through a small amount (\$0.50) from each docket fee in the state, and funding from the state general fund.
106. Court trustees and the attorney general's office handles fee collections, but with little collected with high effort.
107. KLS pieces its funding together from several sources – federal, state, private, and including pro bono attorney services.
108. KLS often assists clients with fee waivers (filing fees are now up to \$175).
109. OR (own recognizant) Cash Deposit Bonds, a hybrid between OR and professional surety bonds, were used for many years in Shawnee County. During the 2007 legislative session, bail bond lobbyists successfully worked to have the law amended to severely limit the use of the OR Cash Deposit Bonds. Prior to that change in the law, an average of over \$300,000 per year was applied to defendants' court costs, fines, and restitution in Shawnee County. With the exception of restitution, which was provided directly to victims, the amount collected from the OR Cash Deposit Bonds went directly into the state general fund. Since the Legislature restricted the use of OR cash deposit bonds, the amount applied to court costs, fines, and restitution in 2010 dropped to approximately \$40,000 for Shawnee County. If the Legislature expanded the usage of OR Cash Deposit Bonds, the collection rate of courts costs and restitution would increase significantly.
110. The OR bonding program could work well in rural areas, and could be accounted for in the FullCourt system.
111. Re collections generally: Shawnee County courts use court trustees and a contractor on the Attorney General's approved list.
112. There is a large amount of fees uncollected and probably uncollectable.
113. Increased filing fees will eventually lead to fewer filings (e.g., small claims, divorces in particular).
114. Several defendants with well over \$1,000 in fees/fines will never pay.

115. With crime up, funding should not go down.
116. Maybe county funds in certain designated accounts (e.g., law library funds) should be made accessible to the Judicial Branch to use as it sees fit.
117. These represented large amounts statewide, with Johnson County in particular having a huge library fund.
118. Counties have built up large highway funds, and a portion of the funding of these comes from an allocation of docket fees.
119. Grants are used now for some tech improvements.
120. Court Trustees office has collected substantial amounts of money which is good for the state.
121. Our filing fees are not exorbitant, but they could be raised.
122. Doubt the state can take over all of the expense to run the courts.
123. Have to become more effective or efficient with status quo funding.
124. Counties would save money if we no longer had them pay to transport prisoners or the mentally ill.
125. Quit raising filing fees on poor people.
126. The funding should be supplied as needed.
127. Raise taxes if needed.
128. A lot of cost is passed on from the state to the county.
129. Concerned with cost of transportation for Court Service Officers.
130. Perhaps we could charge a fee to discourage frivolous motions.
131. The filing fees we have now are split among a number of different services.
132. It is not right that head trauma fund gets a portion of every docket fee.
133. Public hospitals do not have to pay a filing fee for their collection cases.
134. I hope we are not told we have to do something, and then told the counties have to find a way to fund it.
135. Our commissioners do not complain too much about expenses because it is a benefit for them to have the courts.
136. Unfunded mandates increase the tax burden.
137. If the state needs to spend more money, then they need to spend more money.
138. Pay per motion.
139. Filing fee per document.
140. If we funded our courts on a per capita basis, numerous courts would be shut down.
141. I cannot survive on jury pay of \$10 a day.
142. The amount Saline County spends on interpreters has skyrocketed from \$1500 a year in 2005 to \$9000 in 2010.
143. The counties are full of unfunded mandates.
144. We need to make sure that one time savings due not result in long term costs.
145. Uncollected money from fines and fees are a systemic problem.
146. It is difficult to collect outstanding fines and fees from the unemployed and those in jail.

147. One court acknowledged it is not as aggressive as they could be in trying to collect.
148. It takes a lot of effort if you are already understaffed to collect outstanding debts.
149. Concerned about what the state will ask of the counties in regards to funding.
150. If one county ends up with the regional center, is the state going to help pay for the extra office space needed?
151. County budgets are tight.
152. If the state saves money, will it cost the counties more?
153. Investments in technical equipment of \$30,000 might be huge for some counties.
154. If we do consolidate, new buildings will need to be built.
155. Statewide savings can be costly to counties.
156. The courts could charge more for making copies, looking up probate records, and performing genealogy requests.
157. Docket fees are high enough.
158. Some people are not filing because they cannot afford it.
159. We are sentencing some people to failure due to all the fees they have to pay.
160. We are putting a horrible burden on people who cannot afford it.
161. We could charge more for domestic case filings.
162. Child custody investigations are free and they take hours.
163. Charges are not consistent throughout the state.
164. Not seeing a lot of fat in the budget.
165. Financing is a big thing, especially in small counties.
166. Housing and transporting prisoners are a great expense the counties bear.
167. The entire judiciary budget is less than that for some agencies.
168. If costs are only shifting from the state to the counties, there is a false economy.
169. BRC needs to recognize geographical and demographical locations across the state with respect to salaries.
170. A lot of the receivables are criminal, restitution, and traffic. One court allows online payments; however, e-payments have a fee – the higher the fine, the more the fee. Some law enforcement officers can accept credit card payments right on the spot.
171. Clerks are required to take any amount of payment (\$1 or \$5 at a time); that's a huge usage of clerks' time that could be used elsewhere. Space issue: do we revoke probation because someone hasn't paid their court costs, then send them to jail, which are overcrowded, and on and on.
172. On revocations, the bond can be just cash, and it's amazing how fast people can come up with cash. She pursues the bondsmen for skips.
173. County funding is a two-edged sword: sometimes it's a plus, sometimes not.

d. Legislature

1. Legislature really needs to be educated about the court system and structure.
2. Make known to all the new members of the legislature that the court system is funded partially by the state and partially by the county.
3. Is COA necessary; could number of silly appeals be controlled legislatively?
4. Limiting the number of districts to seven (LPA of January 2010 recommendation) is unworkable. The LPA report is simplistic, ironic, has unfunded recommendations.
5. This all started in 1992 in the school finance act when western Kansas was placed under assault by eastern Kansas; the makeup of the legislature has drastically changed, is more concerned with cutting taxes than providing services. The school finance case is the legislature's way to get back at the court.
6. All falls on deaf ears; they do what they want to do regardless of what we say.
7. The fight between the legislature and the supreme court over school finance and death penalty is a problem.
8. More authority should be given back to the counties. They are losing local representation. We need to stop that.
9. All judges should be elected across the state. Grass roots elections would provide judges that local people would know.
10. Adamant opposition to electing judges; district nominating commissions do a good job.
11. The judicial branch is an equal branch of government; Legislature should act like it knows that.
12. The system is not broken or terribly expensive; taxes should be raised rather than losing local courts.
13. The need for the judicial performance commission was questioned because of its cost and the fact that it doesn't help the processing of judge work. Maybe that money (\$3 million) could go to avoid furloughs.
14. The Legislature should be required to visit all the courts in the state.
15. The people in Western Kansas are paranoid because they don't have the political clout that exists in Eastern Kansas and the metropolitan areas.
16. Has heard the judicial branch referred to as an agency by a legislative auditor.
17. There has to be a bottom line amount to fund the judiciary; they are a third branch of government – not an agency; the court needs to stand up to the legislature.
18. When the politics gets involved in the judiciary, you've got problems.
19. There is a difference when there aren't as many legislators who don't have a legal background.

20. Judiciary's problem is figuring out how to demonstrate to the legislature that it is operating as efficiently as it can, that we need a certain amount of money; let the courts decide where the money is to be spent.
21. Requesting the legislature allow the courts to determine "where the money is to be spent" would require being presented in a persuasive way with facts to back it up.
22. If the BRC was the legislature's idea, they would accept recommendations more readily. One wonders if the legislature will see the BRC as a function of the court, and then dismiss its report.
23. Legislative influence of western KS is diminishing, but he doesn't see it ever being done away with.
24. Need to educate our legislature on what equal justice is.
25. Make statutory changes to what is eligible to be heard in court or appealed.
26. Consolidation is a policy consideration and the Legislature must decide literally how far it expects its constituents to travel to access justice.
27. Districts in large urban areas have the legislative delegations to help them get judge and staff positions.
28. The Legislature should not micro-manage a co-equal branch of government by allocating positions, including judges, to particular districts. The Supreme Court should be given the ability to allocate resources, both personnel and financial.
29. Employees lost money in salaries due to the Legislature's failure to complete implementation of the Judicial Salary Initiative.
30. Legislative mandates require an increase in work, and then the legislature cuts money for staff. This is an ongoing concern, and one that worsens continually.
31. Legislators do not visit the courts even when invited, and often try to get out of jury duty if summoned.
32. Judges do go to the legislative hearings to testify. The Supreme Court lobbies works with the legislature to present its message - staff does testify too, and the Chief Justice is in contact with legislative leadership in particular.
33. Several smaller district legislators have been invited to come and see court operations, but have not taken advantage of those invitations.
34. The state needs to fully fund the Judicial Branch.
35. Legislative action often has unintended consequences, e.g., when offender supervisions decrease, funding (to CSO) goes down, but court costs remain or go up.
36. Community corrections cut budgets so now the staff in Independence have no working space.
37. Some of the meth laws (e.g., stealing from drugstores is more heavily penalized than thefts from others) have resulted in person theft rather than store theft.
38. There are border box sentencing problems - more sentencing discretion should be given to judges.

39. Recent DUI changes would result in higher court costs because more D&A tests will be required, but defendants have no means to pay for those.
40. The court should take on the legislature and let them know as a branch of government the courts should not have to beg for funding.
41. Government generally is excessive and punitive by nature and too often acts in the form of unfunded mandates. If the State focused more on constitutional requirements and less on social &/or 'desirable' programs there would be more dollars available for addressing what is truly governments responsibility & obligation.
42. There must be tighter enforcement and a more rigid grid box for DUI infractions to help keep repeat offenders from coming back.
43. There needs to be another and more aggressive round of tort reform through statute review – clarify and remove ambiguity in the law.
44. Reduce the salaries & benefits of legislators.
45. The recommendations in the post audit report are asinine.
46. The legislature has a duty to fund the courts.
47. I wish the legislature would trust our judges.
48. The legislature needs to hear the effects of cost cuts.
49. The legislature says that we are going to charge this or that fee, but the people assessed these costs do not have the money to pay those fees.
50. There are several new state legislators who need to be educated on the needs of the cities.
51. Legislature should pass a bill requiring losers in lawsuits pay; this will get rid of nuisance cases. This was done successfully in Texas. It doesn't deny access to justice. Plaintiffs rethink the filing of nuisance cases.
52. Some statutes require an in-person hearing.
53. . The legislature needs to fund legal services more.
54. . Legislation allows CJ to investigate e-filing.
55. . Statutes prevent a judge from just using cash bonds in some instances; people have the choice of doing cash or cash surety bonds.
56. . It would be ok to not have a courthouse in Oswego. This would require legislative change.
57. . A judge would like to see the legislature give the Chief Justice the flexibility to run the judicial branch budget, including determining whether each county should have a judge.

e. One judge per county

1. Stay with it.
2. Must protect the one judge per county law; it allows access to the judicial system. Local judges should deal with local issues.
3. One judge/county law needs to be maintained.
4. We should maintain one judge per county.
5. Having a judge in each county is very important but provide administrative staff; some have none.

6. Each county must have a judge in residence.
7. If the court is taken out of a county, the county will lose its attorneys.
8. In Syracuse, the contact with government most of the people have is through the city council and its judge.
9. Don't have to have one judge per county - that could be loosened up.
10. Seems like more of a western Kansas issue.
11. The court system is a vital part of a small community, like a hospital.
12. If there is a change in how judges are distributed, it should be the sole discretion of the Supreme Court, not the legislature.
13. If we were starting today, we probably wouldn't make 105 counties, but we do have 105 counties; so, we have to deal with it as it is.
14. Redistricting could end up costing more in new building.
15. Closing courts adds one more vacant building to a community.
16. When politics gets involved in the judiciary, you've got problems.
17. There are very few caseloads that can be dealt with regionally; most need to be kept within their own counties.
18. We want to keep one judge per county.
19. If we get rid of one judge per county it will further limit access to justice and would cause harm to our communities.
20. We need judges who are local. It matters in the administration of justice because they know the differences in the communities and they know the people.
21. No longer need to maintain the one judge per county rule.
22. Get rid of the one judge per county rule but maintain the number of judges and give the Supreme Court the ability to move them around.
23. One judge per county serves an important function. It makes it easier for people to access justice.
24. We need judges locally. Judges are available locally now.
25. All county courts need to remain in place.
26. Each county should have a functioning courthouse, and each county should have at least 1 judge.
27. Cost is not the key in rural and in urban areas.
28. Do not change the one judge per county rule.
29. Changing the rule would be a burden to citizens seeking access to justice.
30. It is critically important for a community to have a judge that lives in the community. A judge that resides in a community is more important to the community than one that travels in for court proceedings.
31. The one judge per judge law is a legislative issue.
32. Supports the one courthouse per county rule.
33. Supports the one courthouse, one county rule.
34. Our forefathers made a decision as to reasonable access, placing it at the county level.
35. If there is not a judicial system in the rural areas, people from the cities and eastern Kansas may not venture out into the rural areas of the state.

f. BRC

1. Almost skeptical of this commission – previous commissions and recommendations were largely ignored because they didn't fit into someone's preconceived ideas. The judicial budget is a relatively small amount of the entire general state budget. The system isn't broken, but it does need to be tweaked.
2. The system isn't broken; don't close courts. The rumor/feeling is that smaller courts will be closed. The Supreme Court has been under fire since certain opinions were issued.
3. Losing a judge is losing a job in the county.
4. Meeting was not as well advertised as it should have been. The placement of these meetings was fixed against the small counties/communities. This is a good meeting for those of us who are here. News reports didn't give the possible outcomes from the commission. The public meeting wasn't mentioned in the news article in Dighton.
5. This commission was established to take more things away from western Kansas and give to eastern Kansas.
6. The courts need more information before they can accurately respond to the questions being asked.
7. This meeting should take place when the committee has recommendations, then we can offer better feedback.
8. Rural counties carry an insignificant number of votes in the legislature. Need the BRC to speak for the needs of southwest Kansas.
9. Don't want the BRC to make recommendations that will disenfranchise rural Kansas to take care of the problems in more urban areas.
10. You may have a better turnout by the public to town hall meetings if you let the public know how they might be able to contribute to these meetings.
11. Take a bold proposal back to the Supreme Court - equal access to justice.
12. The BRC should look at Sedgwick County as they have no district magistrate judges.
13. Let counties make recommendations.
14. The judicial branch needs to be reviewed as there have not been any major changes in 34 years.
15. Sometimes it is difficult to discuss changes in efficiencies, because we wonder what the BRC is going to take from this discussion.
16. Hopes there is not a rush to judgment that change is needed.
17. Hopes problems are appropriately identified, and the decision makers consider whether change is going to make the system better.
18. He encouraged the BRC panel to take the time needed to make good recommendations.
19. She is concerned that when the BRC take their recommendations back to the Supreme Court, costs may decrease in judicial budget, but increase in some other funding agency.

20. Would like the BRC to say what is essential for the courts to operate effectively.
21. Concerned that the recommendations will be numbers driven.
22. There is good representation from rural Kansas on BRC.
23. There are a number of legislators on the BRC.
24. Does not envy the job that is before the BRC.
25. Doubts that BRC will be able to compile everything and present the recommendations by January.

g. Furloughs/staffing

1. Furloughs didn't stop the work – we're not serving the public.
2. Mental stress went on for months prior to furloughs because of not knowing what would be the final outcome (ex: maybe 6 weeks of furloughs?); had to work several days ahead of time in order to be closed; had to do special recordings to tell about the closures; judges couldn't hear cases because clerk's offices were closed; very stressful time.
3. The furloughs did tremendous harm: they denied access to the courts, injured the clerks because their work piled up; a good clerk quit because of the furloughs. Furloughs absolutely should not be done. Most harm is done to the people who do the most work for us. More people will quit if the furloughs happen again this year.
4. No access to records during furloughs which created a potential liability for those checking judgments and titles.
5. Could we have stable funding for the judicial branch so that we don't have to worry every year about furloughs.
6. If the courts were open 1 hour less per day for 16 weeks, that would equal two weeks of furlough. Instead of closing the courts, reduce the hours.
7. On furlough days the mail didn't stop coming in, people didn't stop wanting to file cases. Just had to work harder and longer to catch up afterward.
8. Furlough days jeopardize the statutory requirements for hearings. They may save money but it is not complying with the law.
9. The amount of work does not go away just because a court is closed.
10. Many clerks fear that the weighted caseload study will cause people to lose their jobs. This along with the threat of furloughs has added stress to the clerks' offices.
11. No incentive to remain on the job given furloughs and low pay.
12. Furloughs created a large morale problem.
13. Furloughs lead to a loss of staff, many of whom were the most trained and experienced.
14. Wyandotte County courts are now down 14 individuals, several of whom had large amounts of experience.
15. With reduced budgets, there is more cross training underway in the urban districts at least.
16. If furloughs are longer, good employees will leave.

17. Furloughs created a great deal of uncertainty. (ex: not knowing the length or dates).
18. The backlog of work remained after the furloughs were over.
19. Have been hindered by not being able to hire clerks to work temporary hours.
20. Would not object to higher fees if it means keeping clerks and judges in the courts.
21. We barely have enough Court Service Officers.
22. There have been historical inequities in the placement of personnel.
23. Looking at placing our people logically and intelligently is a good start in addressing those inequities.
24. There is a huge difference in staffing between small and large counties.
25. There is a discrepancy among counties in regard to judicial and staff positions.
26. There is a shortage of court reporters.
27. There are often too many people on the docket.
28. In small courts, if we are one clerk down, that shuts down the court.
29. How are we going take positions away from smaller communities and give them to the larger communities?
30. Interpreters are needed.
31. I am one person in an office that used to have 2.5 people.
32. District clerks aren't paid as well as some municipal clerks.
33. Fear of furloughs is one reason she quit her job as a district clerk.
34. Not happy about her husband's 7% pay cut due to him being a judge.
35. There is a lot of turn-over in district clerks here because they feel threatened that the state was going to pull the rug out from under its employees.
36. The district clerks cannot take vacation because if they take off, no one can fill in.
37. The use of law clerks or research attorneys could save expenses for the state and for the county.
38. Either cut back on the amount of tasks, or give us enough staff to do the job.
39. The whole purpose of the weighted case load study is to assist with staffing.
40. Johnson County loves their county commission – they can hire more judge-type people to hear cases.

h. Other

1. There are legislature-caused issues (is defendant able to pay fines); court-caused issues (technology – can defendant appear by video or must he/she appear in person) to be considered.
2. Commission must consider use of interpreters.
3. You (Topeka) just don't know how we function here until you've been here.
4. DMJs should have been asked all along for their input on court decisions.
5. Consider what will be done with court records if a court is closed. Court records go back into the 1800's.

6. Why would you want to close courthouses without taking care of all the resultant effects: recording documents, mortgages, etc.
7. Commission should return the courts to the local people and decentralize the court system. Local decisions need to be respected. Local control is essential.
8. Law enforcement officers having to travel with prisoners leaves that area inadequately protected in areas with small number of law enforcement officers.
9. Sedgwick County appoints people to hear some types of cases; these people are neither appointed through a district court nominating commission nor elected by the people.
10. Court re-distribution will cause further population declines in Western Kansas.
11. If the Vermont study is any indication on what will happen in Kansas, then the rural areas don't have a chance. The rural counties ended up being consolidated and regionalized in Vermont.
12. Time spent is increased in parts of western Kansas due to the Mountain Time issue.
13. There are three branches of government and they are all equal.
14. I think the system here works well and should not be changed.
15. Can't lose court reporters, we need to be able to keep the record.
16. Weighted caseload study is a waste of time in rural areas due to limited caseload.
17. The appraiser's and county clerks' offices depend upon documentation from the district courts on a constant basis to keep our records updated for taxing purposes. If documents are relocated, it will increase risk for dropped communications and errors.
18. Law enforcement has worked hard to decrease the crime rate. Crime is now down. If start pulling judges and resources from the community, will all of those accomplishments be out the door?
19. Our court system is running efficiently the way it is.
20. If I request a jury trial, it is to be by my peers and my peers are from here, not another district.
21. Need to look for cuts in other areas besides the judicial system which has a huge impact on our quality of life.
22. If courts are closed then you are putting more people on the roads which means more fatality accidents.
23. Look to other states for ideas and possible solutions.
24. Need to maintain probation officer positions in the counties.
25. Smaller districts have more staff than needed as a result of the need to keep the doors open.
26. Centralized direction, decentralized execution. Courts should be given direction from OJA and then allowed to carry out that directive locally.

27. Funding that is provided for the election of judges is not transparent and it should be. The merit system is a better way to go.
28. We are dependent upon other systems that are not functioning properly. Past DUI convictions are needed by the prosecutors but the information received is unreliable.
29. Pro se litigants need assistance.
30. Clerks often get close to providing legal advice to pro se's.
31. Pro se litigants cause huge time efforts now by judges, other attorneys, and clerks of the court – they assist pro se litigants all the time.
32. There is a general need to enforce judicial ethics.
33. Rules about published opinions of the Supreme Court of Kansas are not being followed by that Court.
34. Domestic courts are a business rather than a judicial organization.
35. Innovation could solve these problems – a public notice website to inform citizens of corruption, and an independent citizens' oversight panel empowered to alter decisions of the court and remove judges from cases.
36. Oversight and accountability of the courts is needed and information on the courts should be available on the web.
37. CINC and TPR issues in Kansas show the need for independent citizen panels to oversee the judicial system.
38. Transparency of CINC cases is needed.
39. Pro se's are a major drain on clerk time. Clerks try to help as much as they can, but may not give legal advice). Some training might be given to clerks so they know what they can and cannot do.
40. KLS at times may be able to help pro se's.
41. Public education about the court system is needed.
42. Where will physical files be located if courts are shut down? How will they be accessed?
43. Administrative Assistants need to be used to their full potential.
44. State statutes should be reviewed and changed where possible in order to increase efficient processing of specific case types.
45. Stafford County would be a good geographical location for a new jail to help reduce prisoner transportation costs.
46. Roving court reporters could assist courts on an as needed basis.
47. Problem solving courts provide intense supervision on program participants. These courts have reduced recidivism and should be expanded across the state.
48. Court security is expensive and should be reviewed as part of any changes.
49. When state funding decreases, the financial burden on counties increases.
50. Manpower at prosecution level needs to be reviewed.
51. Look at a true district attorney system. District attorneys can handle serious cases and county attorneys can be used for less serious matters.
52. There is nothing wrong with the current system. Nothing needs to be fixed.

53. Changes in sentencing guidelines creates major changes in local jails. The state pushes changes down and local cities push changes up. All these changes are expensive.
54. Communication between state agencies and other entities needs to be efficient and effective.
55. Changes to court structure will cause changes to other groups like CASA.
56. Look at actions of attorneys and parties. There needs to be more accountability and fines for frivolous lawsuits. The system is bogged down by cases that shouldn't be there.
57. Hope that the court trustee office will not be forgotten as the BRC looks at changes to the court system.
58. It is a waste of time and money when probation officers are subpoenaed to a distant court and then travel there only to find the trial was cancelled.
59. Effectiveness and efficiency are two separate things.
60. Educate the people about the courts.
61. Money is wasted when people are called in for jury duty, and then attorneys make a deal.
62. The court system is essential and should not be threatened.
63. The general public gets frustrated that sentences are too lenient.
64. Do not change anything about the courts.
65. When we are dealing with someone's life, we need to bend over backwards.
66. I think our people do a great job.
67. There has been some animosity between big and small counties.
68. The judicial branch is an equal branch of government, but we are not treated the same.
69. There is a fear out here of how many judges and clerks are going to be taken from us.
70. The court system is working fine the way it is right now.
71. If the court system is working, we do not need to fix it.
72. Smaller counties are more personable because there are not so many Child in Need of Care cases in their counties.
73. By late in the fiscal year, social workers have already spent their budgets, so they are unable to travel to children in distant counties.
74. For the interested parties, the court proceedings are the most important thing going on in their lives.
75. Some smaller counties are doing a better job than we are doing in the mid-size counties due to more personal attention.
76. Court provides other services in addition to processing their caseload. They look up old probate records, provide certified copies of divorce records, and receive genealogy related requests.
77. The state has forced things on the counties such as housing new prisoners.
78. Very concerned about what will be done to rural courts.
79. We, in the rural courts, feel like we are not heard because our needs are different than city courts.

80. Felt the reason for the low turn-out from the public was no publicity.
81. Proud of our court system.
82. Change should be as painless as possible.
83. There is a huge need for translators and not just for the Spanish language.
84. Without the courts, we would turn into a dust bowl.
85. We feel like we cannot trust Topeka.
86. In the elementary schools in Dodge City this year, there are 37 different languages spoken among 6000 students.
87. Commission on Judicial Performance needs to be expanded to people to see the courts.
88. How do you maintain access to justice when those litigants don't speak English and interpreters and needed to facilitate that.
89. Emergency access to courts is very critical to domestic violence victims.
90. Concern was expressed for not having more cases, especially post-divorce, getting placed with mediators and case managers who are not educated or experienced with domestic violence.
91. Courts should be a system of justice and not a system of costing as high as the user can afford.
92. The country of Norway has a policy that helps to keep rural areas populated. The further away people live from the center of government, the lower their taxes.