



THE RESOLUTION EXPERTS®

Good Morning Chief Justice George, Attorney General Brown,
Presiding Justice Klein,

It is a great professional and personal honor to speak today in
behalf of an exceptional judge and wonderful human being,
Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye.

You have just heard about Justice Cantil-Sakauye's stellar
career as a judge and how that has prepared her to serve on
and lead the California Supreme Court. My comments will
focus on the other great responsibility of the Chief Justice of
California—leading the judicial branch.

Leading the judicial branch may be the most important job of
the Chief Justice. The Supreme Court renders decisions on
hundreds of cases each year. These decisions are significant
and have a lasting impact on Californians and the law. By
comparison, our appellate and trial courts rule on hundreds of

thousands of cases annually. These decisions directly affect the parties before those courts, numbering perhaps in the millions of Californians. How these parties are treated, whether they have access to justice, determines how well the judicial branch functions and whether the people of our state respect the judiciary.

Our Constitution empowers the Judicial Council to administer the judicial branch under the leadership of the Chief Justice. Justice Cantil-Sakauye and I serve together on the Judicial Council. This experience has formed my perspective on Justice Cantil-Sakauye's capacity to lead the judicial branch.

California has been fortunate that Chief Justice George has led our branch the past 15 years. Under his great leadership, the California judiciary today is stronger, more independent, financially secure, efficient and accountable than ever before. Yet, enormous challenges remain. Keeping our courts open and able to serve the public requires close cooperation with the other two branches to achieve adequate and dependable funding and to reform branch operations so we can reduce costs and streamline service. It also requires a united judicial branch, so that our message is delivered to Sacramento in one

voice on behalf of the judicial officers, administrators and staff who comprise the judiciary.

Justice Cantil-Sakauye possesses the intelligence, experience and personal skills to maintain and deepen our existing positive relationships with the Governor and Legislature. Not only has she served in the Executive Branch, as Justice Raye described, she has been a leader on the Judicial Council in working with executive and legislative branch leaders to preserve judicial branch funding and independence. Justice Cantil-Sakauye will work effectively with elected officials of both political parties who will be impressed with the reasonable, non-ideological, non-partisan approach she takes to legal issues as well as to judicial branch policy challenges.

Of critical importance, Justice Cantil-Sakauye has been a leader within the Judicial Council as we set policy for the branch. The issues before the Council are weighty. Often very different views are expressed on those issues throughout the branch and among the public. Sometimes, it is not easy to achieve a unified position. With quiet determination, careful listening, an open mind and thoughtful ideas Justice Cantil-Sakauye has been able to forge consensus out of disagreement. On more

than one occasion, her words have been the last words, leading the Council to find a way out of the thicket to reach a result all can embrace. I expect that this skill will be beneficial as the Supreme Court wrestles with tough cases. From first hand experience, I know her consensus-building qualities will be invaluable on the Judicial Council and in other branch-wide matters.

Justice Cantil-Sakauye epitomizes the qualities of a judge. She is respectful of all, she lives to serve others, she is fair, she is patient. As the face of our branch, Justice Cantil-Sakauye will inspire Californians of all backgrounds that there is equality under law in California, that all Californians have access to justice to resolve their disputes. This is what the public wants. And to preserve the people's support of our branch, this is what the judiciary needs. I know I speak for the entire Judicial Council in expressing full confidence that Justice Cantil-Sakauye will carry forward the outstanding judicial branch leadership we have enjoyed under Chief Justice George.

Governor Schwarzenegger made a brilliant choice. I urge this Commission to confirm his nomination of Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye as California's next Chief Justice.