

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT



Office of Public Information

contact: Marcia McBrien | (517) 373-0129

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT VOTES TO RETAIN DETROIT, TRAVERSE CITY OFFICES

LANSING, MI, March 5, 2009 – In a vote taken during the Michigan Supreme Court’s public administrative conference today, the Court decided to keep open its Detroit and Traverse City offices, with the Court’s chief justice citing benefits for the public and legal community through the Court having a presence outside the capital.

Chief Justice Marilyn Kelly noted that the Court’s Detroit office is in a state-owned building, Cadillac Place. Because there is no tenant to replace the Court if it moves out of that space, the rent the Court would pay to the state would be re-allocated to other tenants in state-owned space and taxpayers would not save that amount, she said. Another concern is that limiting the Court’s presence to the capital would effectively limit the pool of potential justices and isolate the Court from other communities.

Law school deans and representatives of attorney organizations, including the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association and the American Board of Trial Advocates, asked that the Court retain its Detroit and Traverse City offices, Kelly reported.

“It’s clear that they are very concerned about having the widest possible field of high-quality applicants for the Court, and opportunities for the legal community and general public to interact with the Court,” Kelly said. “Too, when all is said and done, any savings would be a small fraction of what was originally projected when the Court first addressed this issue last year, and other costs, such as moving, travel, and training new staff, were not taken into account. We would effectively be laying off staff who cannot move their families to Lansing. Individual justices would be less available to communities throughout the state. When we add to those factors the loss of geographic diversity, any benefit of closing these offices are outweighed by the downside.”

-- MSC --