



## MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **District Courts Celebrate 50 Years of Serving the Public**

LANSING, MI, August 13, 2018 – The Michigan Supreme Court today released a commemorative book in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Michigan District Judges Association (MDJA) highlighting the history of the district courts throughout Michigan. The book, “[Celebrating 50 Years](#),” features the history of the district court, judges past and present, and a look back at the laws that created the district court in Michigan.

“We are thrilled to have the history of the district court captured in this book,” said current Michigan District Judges Association President and 46<sup>th</sup> District Court Chief Judge Shelia R. Johnson. “Seeing the evolution of the district courts makes you realize how much has been accomplished to make our courts more accessible and accountable to the public.”

The state Legislature passed Public Act 154 in 1968, which created the district court system. Referred to as “The People’s Court,” the district courts have more contact with the public than any other court in the state. District court has exclusive jurisdiction over all civil claims for damages up to \$25,000, including small claims, landlord-tenant disputes, civil infractions, as well as misdemeanor criminal cases. More than 3.2 million cases were filed in district court in 2017. In 2017, the average district court judge disposed of 89% of misdemeanors within 63 days and 97% within 126 days, better than the time guidelines.

“I hope that by illuminating the people and events that have shaped Michigan’s district court system, this booklet will foster a greater understanding and appreciation of our judiciary as a whole,” said Chief Justice Stephen J. Markman.

Markman also praised 62B District Court Chief Judge William Kelly of Kentwood for his work in preparing the report’s historical analysis. “Chief Judge Kelly spent countless hours putting together a complete history of the district courts. His work captures the rich and fascinating history of Michigan’s district courts.”

For more information regarding the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Michigan’s district court system, visit: [www.courts.mi.gov/MDJA50](http://www.courts.mi.gov/MDJA50).