

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF KEY WEST, FLORIDA, URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO RETAIN A TOTAL OF FOUR COUNTY JUDGESHIPS FOR MONROE COUNTY; URGING THE FLORIDA SUPREME COURT TO RECONSIDER THEIR RECOMMENDATION TO DECERTIFY ONE JUDGESHIP, AND REMOVE FROM CONSIDERATION THE NOTION OF DECERTIFYING A SECOND MONROE COUNTY COURT JUDGESHIP IN 2018; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the December 15, 2016 report from the Florida Supreme Court, titled "No. SC16-2127 IN RE: CERTIFICATION OF NEED FOR ADDITIONAL JUDGES" included a recommendation to the Florida Legislature to decertify one of the four County Court Judge positions in Monroe County; and

WHEREAS, County Judges are elected to six year terms, and are tasked with considering misdemeanor cases, landlord-tenant disputes, traffic cases, small claims and mediations; and

WHEREAS, in Monroe County, a County Court Judge is assigned in each of three geographical areas (Key Largo, Marathon, Key West), with the fourth judge also assigned to Key West, the county seat, which is the most populous area (both residents and visitors) in the Florida Keys and the location where the highest number of cases are filed and heard; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court's report takes into consideration caseloads, but may not properly consider the 100-mile long

geography of Monroe County, and the obstacle to justice that the removal of even one judge could present for citizens who lack the time and money to travel up to 100 miles each way for jury duty, or a brief hearing; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF KEY WEST, FLORIDA AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1: That the Key West City Commission urges the Florida Legislature to reject the recommendations of the Florida Supreme Court in SC16-2127, and retain a total of four (4) County Judgeships in Monroe County for FY 17 and in subsequent years.

Section 2: That the Key West City Commission urges the Florida Supreme Court to re-consider its recommendation to defund or decertify one County Judge Position in Monroe County at this time, and to remove from consideration the notion of decertifying a second Monroe County Court Judgeship in FY 18.

Section 3: That the City Clerk is hereby authorized to transmit a certified copy of this Resolution to Governor Rick Scott, Attorney General Pam Bondi, Senate President Joe Negron, House Speaker Richard Corcoran, Senator Anitere Flores, Representative Holly Raschein and to Chief Judge Jorge LaBarga, and Justices Barbara Pariente, Fred Lewis, Peggy Quince, Charles Canady, Ricky Polston and Alan Lawson, of the Florida Supreme Court.

Section 4: That this Resolution shall go into effect immediately upon its passage and adoption and authentication by the signature of the Presiding Officer and the Clerk of the Commission.

Passed and adopted by the City Commission at a meeting held this _____ day of _____, 2017.

Authenticated by the Presiding Officer and Clerk of the Commission on _____ day of _____, 2017.

Filed with the Clerk on _____, 2017.

Mayor Craig Cates _____

Vice Mayor Clayton Lopez _____

Commissioner Sam Kaufman _____

Commissioner Richard Payne _____

Commissioner Margaret Romero _____

Commissioner Billy Wardlow _____

Commissioner Jimmy Weekley _____

CRAIG CATES, MAYOR

ATTEST:

CHERYL SMITH, CITY CLERK