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## 2010 STATE OF THE JUDICIARY AVAILABLE ONLINE AND WILL AIR ON INDIANA PUBLIC BROADCASTING STATIONS

The Chief Justice of Indiana, Randall T. Shepard delivered the 2010 State of the Judiciary to a joint session of the Indiana General Assembly Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>. "Dealing With The Recession: A Court System That Won't Roll Over," will air on Indiana Public Broadcasting Stations next week. Text of the address and video of the speech is also available at [courts.in.gov](http://courts.in.gov).

The half-hour special devoted to the State of the Judiciary will air on eight Indiana Public Broadcasting Stations the week of January 24<sup>th</sup>. Please see the listings below for details on when the speech will be televised in your area.



Trial Court Judges and other guests listening to the address from the House of Representatives gallery.

The address, which was also carried live on four Indiana Public Broadcasting radio stations, focused on how today's economic pressures affect the judicial branch. "The Great Recession has driven our new filings to record numbers. This may sound a little technical, but it's very human. It's a tangible marker of a society under stress," explained Chief Justice Shepard to Indiana lawmakers and Governor Mitch Daniels. The Chief Justice asked for collaboration between the branches on collecting all the revenue that the law says is due to pay for court operations.

House Bill 1271, which would allow the Judicial Branch to better help veterans in the court system, was also a main point of the address. Chief Justice Shepard explained, "One of the results of the fact that our nation has experienced eight years of war is that we find people in court with special disabilities and needs that flow from the pressure of their military service. I ask that the legislature give us a framework under which we can establish veterans' courts."

He pointed to the poor economy as a reason the number of children in need of court services continues to grow. Chief Justice Shepard announced the number of new volunteers for the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program, which helps abused and neglected children in state care, was up 26% in 2009 compared to the previous year.

Lawmakers also received a report on a pledge he made one year ago to help homeowners facing foreclosure. Since January 2009, the Supreme Court has trained 1,112 judges, lawyers and mediators on how to best handle foreclosure cases. The success of court technology improvement initiatives was also described to the General Assembly. A statewide case management system, called Odyssey, has already been installed in 50 courts in 18 counties.

The House Chamber erupted in applause when Chief Justice Shepard explained what the Supreme Courts is doing to make sure juries best understand the instructions given to them when they are

deciding a case. "We are about to complete a project called "Plain English" jury instructions," said Chief Justice Shepard. "We explain law to jurors thousands of times each year, all too often in jargon that's nearly impenetrable. By this spring we'll issue an entire new set of instructions, legally accurate to be sure, but written with the help of English teachers so that jurors can more easily comprehend them."

Chief Justice Shepard talked about how the judiciary will do its part to aid in the budget crisis. He said, "For example, we're going to stop doing something we've been doing since May 1817. For 193 years, we have been mailing the decisions in appeals to the lawyers. We will now send them by e-mail only, and we will save \$39,000 this year alone."

The address is required by the Indiana Constitution. Indiana lawmakers must receive an update on the "condition of the courts" according to Article 7, Section 3. However, a highlight of the address had nothing to do with the court system. Chief Justice Shepard called it "a story about Indiana's spirit." He described an Indianapolis Star article on Emmerich Manual High School's music program. It prompted him and others to attend a December music program at the school. "The response was phenomenal. As my family turned the corner on Madison Avenue you could see headlights all the way up the hill to the next stoplight, cars lined up hoping to get into a parking lot long before filled to capacity," explained the Chief Justice. "That thousands of citizens came to cheer them on was simply thrilling."

Like the teachers who have dedicated their careers to helping students most in need, the Chief Justice proclaimed his confidence in the Judicial Branch. "I can tell you that there are plenty in our court system who, like those persistent and unshakable music teachers, even in this dark hour, are unwilling to roll over and play dead. They've decided to stand their ground, "to spend and be spent" in the cause of building and rebuilding a place worthy of the fine name Indiana."

The 2010 address was Chief Justice Shepard's twenty-third State of the Judiciary. To watch the speech or read the text, visit [courts.in.gov](http://courts.in.gov). Indiana Public Broadcasting Stations will air the State of the Judiciary next week.

Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. EST  
WNIT-TV Elkhart/South Bend

Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. EST/6 p.m. CST  
WNIN-TV Evansville  
WVUT-TV Vincennes  
WTIU-TV Bloomington  
WIPB-TV Muncie  
WFWA-TV Fort Wayne

Thursday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 p.m. EST  
WFYI-TV Indianapolis

Sunday January 31<sup>st</sup> at 8:30 a.m. CST  
WYIN-TV Merrillville