

## News & Insights

### Craigie Authors Article for *Daily Journal*

*Offers Perspectives on How to Litigate in Overburdened California Judicial System*

**February 20, 2013**

Alex W. Craigie, a member in the Labor & Employment practice in the Firm's Los Angeles Office, contributed an article – “Strategies for litigating in a crumbling court system” – that appeared in the February 20 edition of the *Daily Journal*.

In the article, Craigie addresses how, over the past five years, the California state judicial system has endured nearly \$1.2 billion in cutbacks. This has led to the closure of 164 courtrooms and roughly 2,000 layoffs. With another round of budget cuts planned for June 2013, Craigie notes that there will be 25 percent fewer courtrooms, and the inventory of pending personal injury cases – 16,000 in number – will be split among just three judges.

Craigie offers fellow litigators several strategies to cope with this challenging environment. Among them:

- *Consider the Case Management Conference.* Craigie observes that since this conference is the first – and sometimes only – opportunity to meet the judge before the trial, attorneys who come prepared with a detailed agenda and action plan can both ease the judge's workload and often advance their client's interests.
- *Manage client expectations.* Craigie underscores the importance of making certain your client has a reasonable expectation of how a case will progress toward trial. It's essential that your clients understand it's the court system, not your practice, that's under stress.
- *Be proactive in simplifying the case.* In the past, plaintiffs pursued every theory – and initially kept every party initially sued – as long as possible. Getting to the heart of a matter sooner, says Craigie, is not only the right thing to do, but will significantly reduce the judicial logjam.

The *Daily Journal*, read by more than 800 in-house lawyers and general counsel, is one of the nation's leading daily legal newspapers, providing news and trend pieces on litigation, corporate transactions and regulatory legal work in Northern and Southern California

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