

Message from the Chief Justice
Chief Justice Gerald F. Schroeder, Idaho Supreme Court
Written Message
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One of the characteristics that we see from one end of the state to the other, from the austere atmosphere of the Supreme Court building to the most hectic traffic court, the stressful domestic court, or the high stakes trial of a district court, is a commitment of judges to their communities. I have always known outstanding judges, but the depth today is the strongest it has ever been.

The judges of today know that they must be able to manage caseloads that would have been considered insurmountable not too many years ago and then must extend further to meet current social needs that require additional time, education, and insights. Concepts of gang violence, meth addicts, babies born with drugs in their little bodies, sexual predators reaching out through electronics – these are not things that have always been prominent on the judicial plate or even known on that plate. They come on top of the traditional fare that the courts have always and will always deal with – a fare that expands constantly as our population grows and the complexity of issues grows.

The Idaho courts, together with the legislature and the governor, are focusing a vision of the 21st century which will mean that the judges will increasingly add to their growing caseloads problem solving functions – expanded alternative dispute resolution, expanded drug and mental health courts, family courts and juvenile courts, expanded need for understanding of the special problems of a growing and diverse population, expanded use of technology to do things promptly and well.

The state of the Idaho judiciary – it is committed. Our judges know this is a wonderful state with exceptional people who do incredibly progressive things when given the opportunity. Most people are good, but even good people must at times go to court to resolve their differences. The doors must be open promptly so they can do their legal business and get back to planting, growing, building, whatever adds to life. Other people are bad or perceived to be bad. Again, the courts must clean up whatever mess is left in the aftermath of their conduct. They must do so promptly and fairly.

The Idaho judiciary is performing with broad-ranging knowledge, specialized expertise, a proper degree of patience, and a basic sense of justice, committed to the highest degree of service to those we serve.