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Glenn A. Grant J.A.D.
Administrative Director of the Courts
P.O. Box 037
Trenton, NJ 08625



Re: Comment Period – Municipal Court Reform

Dear Director Grant:

I wish to thank the Supreme Court for this opportunity to comment on the July 17, 2019 committee Report on Municipal Court Reform. I think all of the topics presented to the committee are positive steps for Municipal Court Reform.

I would like to point out one or two other concerns that I have developed from my own municipal court experience. The first concern is the frequency with which Bench Warrants issue from municipal court. I am somewhat amazed by the sheer number of bench warrants that emanate from a single municipal court session. I mainly reference Camden City Municipal Court. I know from my experiences representing clients that these absences are very often something other than negligent or willful. A number of individuals are just late for Court or are actively conferencing with their lawyers while roll is conducted. Some defendants are understandably confused by the identification of various courts within a locality and they erroneously report to the Superior Court. Many people patiently sit unknowingly in the wrong Courtroom within the municipal Court

facility itself. Many more people simply have an incorrect home address on record and would not have received a particular mailed summons. Still other defendants are outside of the continental U.S. when their matters are called and again, warrants issue whether or not these traveling defendants have tried to notify the court.

Another separate but related aspect of this problem is that the Municipal Court is often used like an administrative agency in order to monitor compliance with the local housing code. Often, matters are re-scheduled over and over again so that a defendant can undertake and facilitate a complicated compliance process before code enforcement charges are disposed of. Many defendants locked into these extended court matters eventually lose track of the dates after a half-dozen or more appearances. An arrest warrant should not be issued for a person who has appeared faithfully but then inexplicably misses a date.

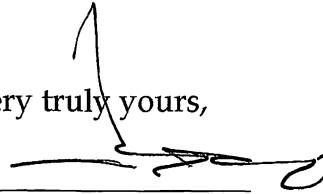
In Camden City, it seems that we may have a specific problem of summonses being mailed to out of state property owners who are not designated on a Landlord Registration form as a person willing to accept legal process and who have not declared themselves actively involved in property management. These innocent individuals by merely being named on a Deed also are made subject to arrest without regard to any of the surrounding circumstances.

I would propose that a teaspoon of due process could relieve the police departments of this state from the burden of enforcing thousands of municipal arrest warrants. This would be so if only a few minor inquiries could be made

by the court and a plausible factual basis for actual defiance is established before resorting to the power to arrest and detention.

Thank you for allowing these comments.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charles M. Izzo', written over a horizontal line.

Charles M. Izzo