



Report to Governor
C.L. "Butch" Otter
and the 1st Regular
Session of the 63rd
Idaho Legislature

Idaho Supreme Court
451 W. State St.
PO Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720

P: (208) 334-2246
F: (208) 947-7590
www.isc.idaho.gov



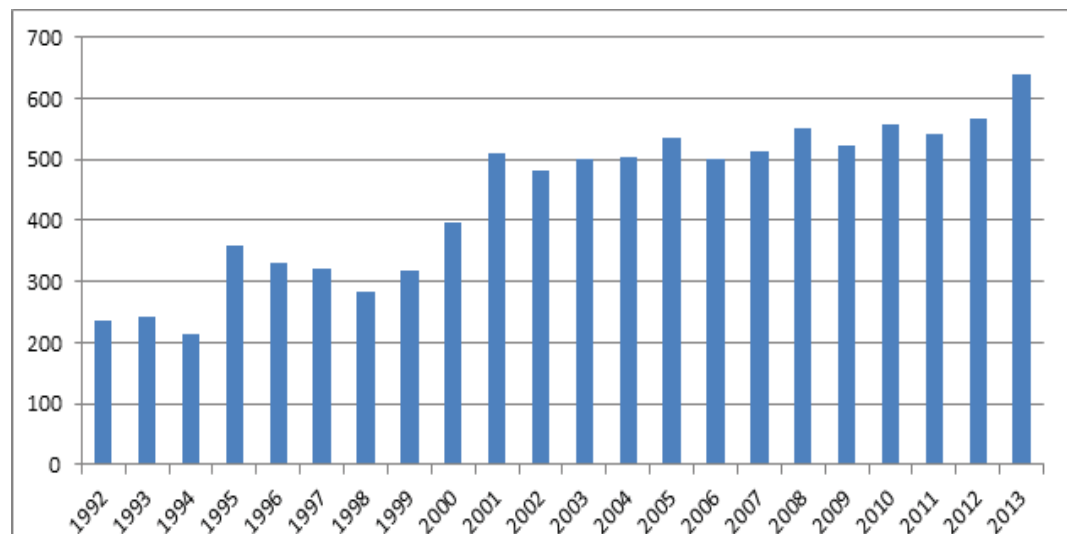
Idaho Court of Appeals

"Right and Justice . . . Without Delay"

In order to fulfill the requirement in the Idaho Constitution that state courts administer "right and justice . . . without delay," the Idaho Court of Appeals was established by statute (Idaho Code sections 1-2401 through 1-2411) in 1980, and the Court received funding to begin operation in January, 1982. The Court of Appeals was created to alleviate significant backlog that had developed within the Supreme Court as the result of rapid population and appellate caseload growth in Idaho during the 1970's.

THE COURT OF APPEALS RESPONDS TO GROWTH IN CASELOADS

Throughout the 1990's, appeals assigned to the Court of Appeals grew from an average of approximately 200 per year to more than 300 per year. By 2007, that number had risen to over 500. Consequently, in 2007, the Idaho Supreme Court appointed a "Task Force on Idaho's Court of Appeals: The Next Quarter Century and Beyond." The Task Force was directed to make recommendations regarding staffing, facility needs, technology, and operations. As a result, a fourth judge was added and took office in 2009, and cases are now heard by three-judge panels. In FY2014, the Court of Appeals was assigned over 640 appeals and sits in panels of three. The Court of Appeals caseload is about 80% criminal appeals and 20% civil appeals. Below is a chart showing the total number of cases assigned to the Court of Appeals over the last two decades.



THE COURT OF APPEALS REACHES OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

The Court continues to travel to other parts of the state to hear oral arguments. In 2014 the Court traveled to Moscow and Coeur d' Alene to hear appeals from those areas, thus reducing the burden on litigants to come to Boise. In addition, members of the Court participated in new student orientation at the University of Idaho and Concordia Law Schools. In May, as part of Law Day celebration, the Court conducted an oral argument at Capital High School in Boise with several hundred high school students in attendance. The Court of Appeals judges have taken on an increasing leadership role in judiciary committees and programs, including judicial recruitment, technology, language access, and juries.



CHIEF JUDGE SERGIO A. GUTIERREZ

Judge Gutierrez earned a Bachelor of Arts degree, cum laude, in Elementary Education from Boise State University and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of California, Hastings Law School.

As a young lawyer, Judge Gutierrez practiced in southwest Idaho. In November of 1993, Governor Cecil D. Andrus appointed him to be Idaho's first Hispanic district judge. He was then twice elected to retain this position by the voters and also served as Administrative District Judge in the Third Judicial District. Governor Dirk Kempthorne appointed Judge Gutierrez to serve on the Idaho Court of Appeals beginning in January 2002, and he subsequently has been elected to serve two full terms.



JUDGE KAREN L. LANSING

Judge Lansing is a native Idahoan and the second female judge appointed to serve on the Court of Appeals and currently the only woman serving on the appellate courts of Idaho. She received a B.A. degree in Political Science from the University of Idaho and received a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Washington in 1978. She served as an assistant city attorney for the City of Boise in 1978 and 1979. She joined the Boise-based law firm of Hawley, Troxell, Ennis & Hawley in 1979, becoming a partner in 1985. She practiced law in that firm until her appointment to the Court of Appeals in June 1993.



JUDGE DAVID W. GRATTON

Judge Gratton was born and raised in Emmett, Idaho. He attended Boise State University, graduating in 1982 with a B.A. degree in Political Science. Judge Gratton received a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Idaho College of Law in 1985. He served as an intern law clerk for Ninth Circuit Judge J. Blaine Anderson in 1984 and law clerk to United States District Court Judge Harold L. Ryan from 1985 to 1987. Judge Gratton joined the law firm of Evans Keane LLP in 1987, becoming a partner in 1993, until his appointment to the Idaho Court of Appeals in 2009, by Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter.



JUDGE JOHN MELANSON

Judge John M. Melanson is a 1978 graduate of Idaho State University (B.B.A.), and a 1981 graduate of the University of Idaho College of Law (J.D.). He practiced law in Buhl, Idaho, from 1981 through 1994. He received the Idaho State Bar Pro Bono Publico Award in 1994. In 1995, he was appointed Magistrate Judge for Lincoln County, a position in which he served until December 2000 when he was appointed District Judge for the Fifth Judicial District with chambers in Minidoka County. He was elected to that position in 2002 and reelected 2006. The Idaho Supreme Court appointed him presiding Judge of the Snake River Basin Adjudication in 2003. In 2009, he was appointed to the Idaho Court of Appeals by Governor Otter.