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Supreme Court Committee on Electronic Filing Named

New Jersey Chief Justice Stuart Rabner has named a distinguished assembly of judges, attorneys, corporate executives and state and federal government officials to the newly created Supreme Court Special Committee on Electronic Filing. He has asked the committee to prepare a comprehensive set of recommendations on how to make e-filing broadly available in New Jersey's court system.

"Our goal is to embrace modern technology as part of the way the courts operate. Doing so will make our court system more efficient and user friendly. It will also enable us to anticipate the needs of litigants, practitioners, and judges in the years to come. We must prepare for the next generation of young lawyers who live in a high-tech wireless world," said Chief Justice Rabner.

The Judiciary has used a system of electronic filing in the Special Civil Part of the Civil Division since October 2000. The system, called JEFIS, for Judiciary Electronic Filing/Imaging System, accepts filings from attorneys for certain civil cases. Since its inception eight years ago, JEFIS has received 2.6 million filings, achieving significant savings in paper use and storage expense.

"Because of our experience with JEFIS, we know that e-filing is more effective and efficient than collecting and storing hundreds of millions of pieces of paper. Today we process only a fraction of our cases electronically and we must do more," said Rabner.

"The task is daunting -- especially given the practical and financial constraints we face -- but it is essential to the future of the Judiciary," Rabner said.

John J. Degnan, vice chairman and chief operating officer of The Chubb Corporation and former New Jersey attorney general has agreed to chair the committee.

"I am pleased to have the opportunity to serve the Judiciary on this committee," Degnan said. "I firmly believe that we can make recommendations to the Chief Justice to facilitate access by practitioners and the public through the appropriate use of technology.

"Government must be responsive and aligned with the needs of its citizenry. For the courts, that is especially important in order to be accessible, fair, impartial and efficient. The task ahead of the committee carries exciting potential and I am certain we are up to the challenge," he added.

The committee will examine, among other issues: what electronic filing systems the Judiciary already has in place and how those could be used or improved upon; how to identify the type of system that should be built; how to integrate electronic filings by attorneys with case management systems; where the greatest need for e-filing exists and where the greatest opportunities lie for rapid deployment; how to identify and obtain resources both within the Judiciary and from the private sector, particularly with the very difficult funding issues facing the state; how New Jersey can benefit from

e-filing practices in other court systems. The committee also will make recommendations on reasonable time frames to achieve e-filing in New Jersey's Judiciary.

The committee met briefly last week for an introductory session and, over the next few weeks, will organize working groups to research and develop recommendations for the future of electronic filing in New Jersey's courts. [A list of the committee members](#) is attached.

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