

Vice-Chair Householder: I was going to ask, so you don't think you have the fox guarding the hen house?

Justice Loughry: Absolutely not...So, so in the past, um invoices would come in, invoices would get paid, invoices would go out. There's not a single invoice that comes in, my understanding is there's not a single invoice that comes into our court system where at least two individuals review those and, and you know I've been asked since this occurred many times, "Well don't the justices sign off on every invoice that comes through the court system?" Well, no. And of course not because we have more than twenty, keep in mind we're talking about an entire court system in all 55 counties. We have more than 25,000 invoices that come through the court system every single year, and on top of that we have another 10-15,000 transactions on our purchasing cards, so we're also sitting down.... We haven't had written procedures and protocols, and I want to have written procedures and protocols for everything. We need that, we just...the people of West Virginia deserve that. So we want to put things in place so not only this will never happen again but it doesn't matter who is in the Chief position or whose in the Legislature or whatever...Another big thing, that we did and I know I touched upon it, but the change of the Chief Justice position is huge. It's not about me, I'm talking about twenty years down the road. If you look, let's look at renovation period, okay, these renovations occurred from 2008 until 2014. Alright, I wasn't even on the court until 2013, so for that 6 year period you had five individuals who served in a one-year capacity, as Chief Justice I think that creates an impossibility. It puts a lot of pressure on each one of those individuals for any long term project. I think that's one more example.

Vice-Chair Householder: Well you, know there a lot of public pressure from this body to do something because I don't think you'd dispute that it was outrageous, there were a lot of claims. I mean the average tax payer they're out-out-raged, what they, from what was reported so we want to make sure there are some safe guards or assurances that this will, will not happen again.

Justice Loughry: I think that that is an absolutely legitimate concern and question. There is nobody more outraged by these purchases than me. Many people in this room have known me for more than two decades, and they know, I would have never approved such things, however there was clearly a failure of oversight at the court. These things happened. We can't go back and change them, but what we can do is go forward, make sure something like this never happens again.