

SUPREME COURT OF ARKANSAS

No. CR11-826

BARRY AARON

PETITIONER

V.

HON. JOE E. GRIFFIN, CIRCUIT
JUDGE

RESPONDENT

Opinion Delivered November 3, 2011

CONCURRING OPINION.

ROBERT L. BROWN, Associate Justice

I agree that Aaron’s pro se petition for writ of mandamus is moot, as the respondent has now acted on the motions that are the subject of the mandamus action. I write separately, however, to underscore again the need for a procedure to track pending pleadings in the judicial circuits of this state. In the instant case, on March 13, 2002, Aaron filed two pro se motions pursuant to Act 1780 of 2001. The respondent did not dispose of these two motions until August 26, 2011. The motions were apparently “inherited” by the current sitting judge. But, in any event, a nine-year delay in acting on a pleading is unacceptable.

In cases where a significant amount of time has gone by between the filing of a pleading and action taken by the circuit court on that pleading, this court has issued opinions in mandamus actions calling for the circuit courts to keep tighter control of their dockets. *See, e.g., Cabral v. Keith*, 364 Ark. 456, 220 S.W.3d 683 (2005) (per curiam) (urging all judicial districts to develop a system whereby judges are promptly made aware of filings in



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their courts); *McCoy v. Phillips*, 357 Ark. 368, 166 S.W.3d 564 (2004) (per curiam) (urging all judicial districts to develop a system whereby judges are made aware of filings in their courts). We have also reminded the bench that the circuit court has the obligation of ensuring that each matter filed receives a reasonably prompt disposition. *Cabral, supra*.

Without such a tracking system for monitoring the filings in the circuit courts, the administration of justice is hampered, and petitioners are denied an effective disposition of their cases, which should be the hallmark of any judicial system. The judicial circuits of this state, if they have not already done so, should assess the systems in place in their judicial circuits and take whatever steps are necessary to prevent undue delays such as the one that occurred in this case.