

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

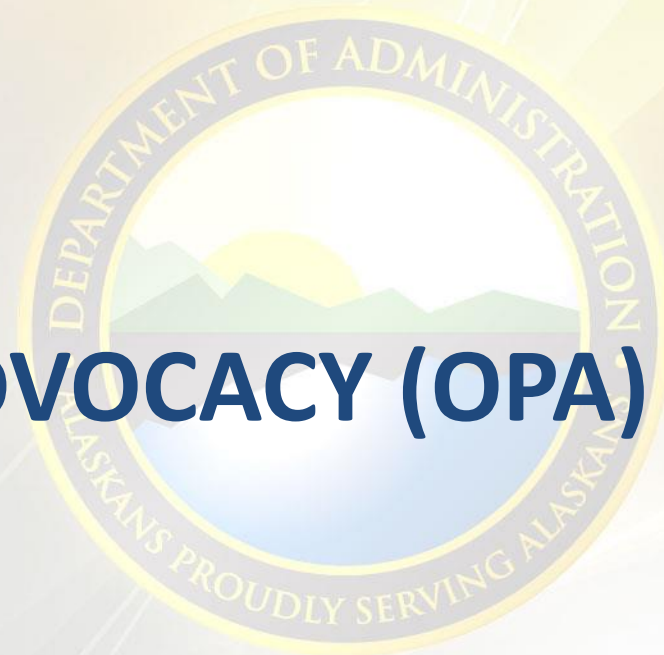
DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Presentation to
**Senate Finance
Subcommittee**
February 26, 2016

Deputy Commissioner Leslie Ridle
Office of Public Advocacy Director
Rick Allen
Public Defender Quinlan Steiner



OFFICE OF PUBLIC ADVOCACY (OPA)



OPA BUDGET

Office of Public Advocacy	FY15 Mngmt Plan	FY16 Mngmt Plan	FY17 Governor	% Change from FY15
UGF	23,803.5	23,637.5	22,997.3	-3.39%
DGF	130.7	130.7	380.7	
OTHER	1,186.8	1,294.3	1,794.3	
FED	250.2	251.3	251.3	
TOTAL	25,371.2	25,313.8	25,423.6	0.21%

*FY17 DGF increase of \$250.0 is unknown if collectible



OPA CHALLENGES

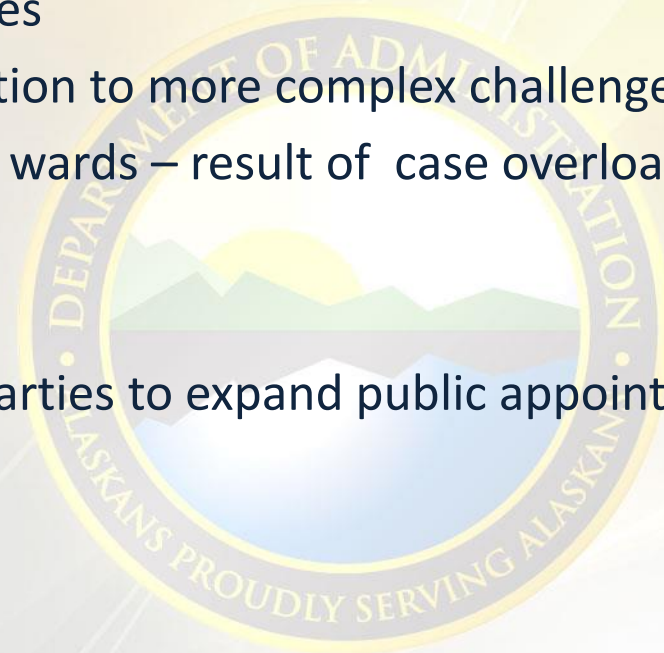
Mission Statement: *"To provide legal advocacy and guardianship services to vulnerable Alaskans."*

Public Guardians

- 86 wards per caseload – recommended national maximum is 40
- Lack of public resources to support wards requires increasing amount of time to deal with bureaucracy and acquire resources
- Aging population requires increasing attention to more complex challenges
- Current lawsuit alleging PGs unable to visit wards – result of case overload

Flores Cases

- Continuing attempts by Court and pro se parties to expand public appointments in custody cases



OPA CHALLENGES

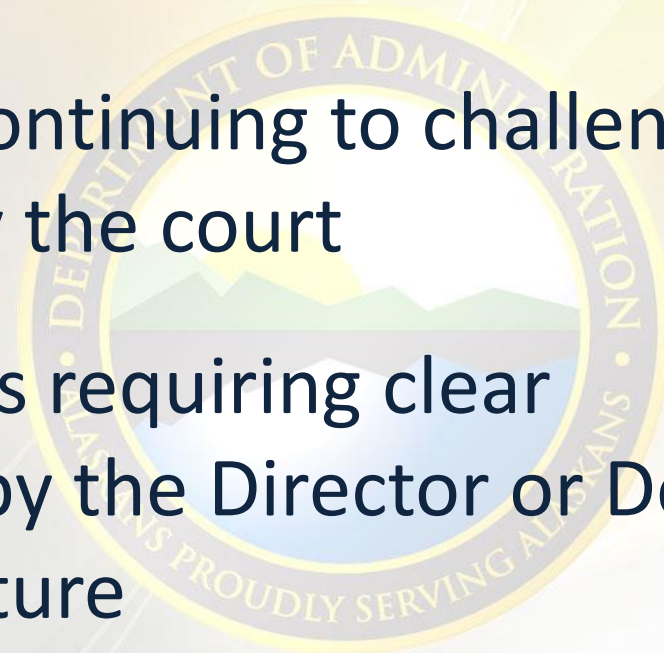
CINA Cases

- Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) represent the best interest of abused and neglected children in Child in Need of Aid (CINA) proceedings
- 58% increase in GAL caseloads in the past 12-18 months
- Additional 1,000 appointments in a one year period
- National standards suggest 60-80 children per GAL
- OPA averages of 110-120 children per GAL
- CINA parents' attorneys have seen a 42% caseload increase in the past 12 months
- Trend is continuing
- Drastic caseload increase results from:
 - Changes in policy at the Office of Children's Services
 - Alaska's heroin epidemic

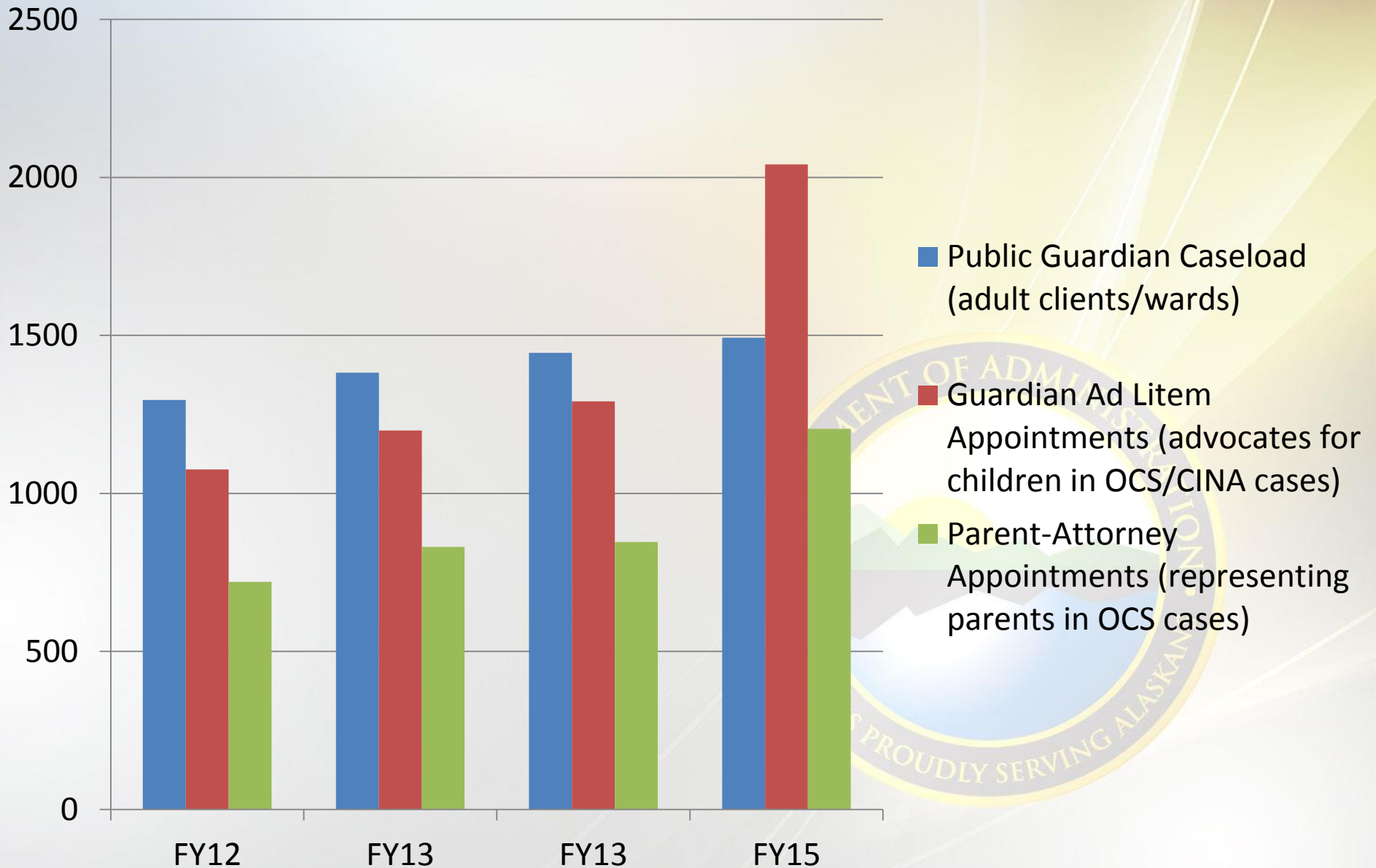
Alaska GAL caseloads are unsustainable and violate best practice standards. Despite best efforts of dedicated GALs, it is not possible to visit children more than once every two or three months at most, and the problem is exacerbated in rural areas.

OPA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

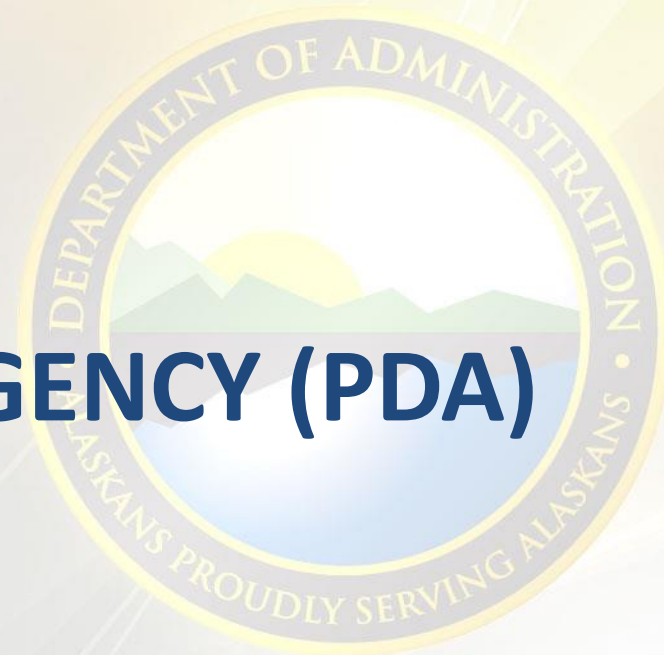
- Reducing contractor costs through implementation of case caps
- Restructuring to keep more cases in-house and reduce costs
- Actively and successfully continuing to challenge improper appointments by the court
- Tight cost control measures requiring clear justification and approval by the Director or Deputy for any significant expenditure



OPA CASELOADS



PUBLIC DEFENDER AGENCY (PDA)



PDA BUDGET

Public Defender Agency	FY2015 Mngmt Plan	FY2016 Mngmt Plan	FY2017 Governor	% Change from FY15
UGF	25,963.3	25,481.8	24,210.5	-6.75%
DGF	310.5	313.7	823.7	
OTHER	633.0	635.8	690.8	
FED	0.0	0.0	0.0	
TOTAL	26,906.8	26,431.3	25,725.0	-4.39%

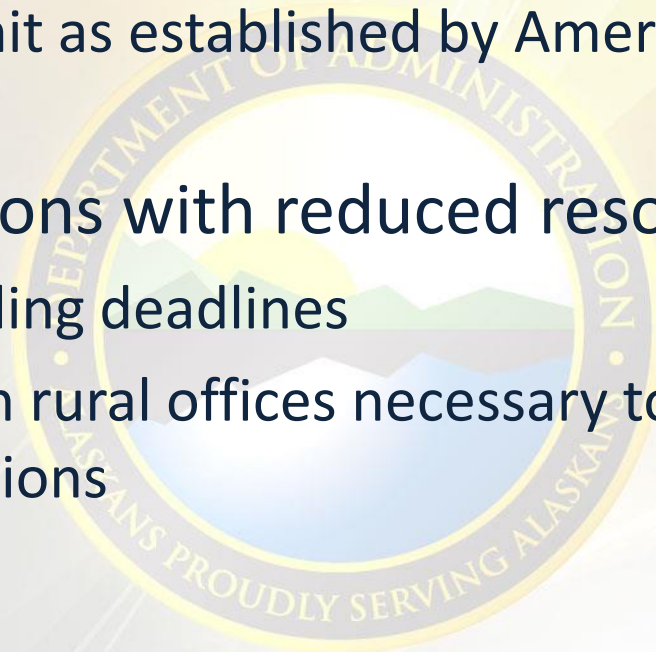
*FY2017 DGF increase of \$510.0 is unknown if collectible



PDA CHALLENGES

Mission Statement: *“To provide constitutionally mandated legal representation to indigent client appointed by the court.”*

- 43% increase from FY14 to FY15 in CINA cases statewide
 - 60% increase from FY14 to FY15 in CINA cases in Anchorage
- Average of 248 cases per Public Defender in 2015
 - Caseload at maximum ethical limit as established by American Bar Association
- Meeting constitutional obligations with reduced resources
 - Meeting new Court of Appeals filing deadlines
 - Maintaining effective presence in rural offices necessary to meet ethical and constitutional obligations

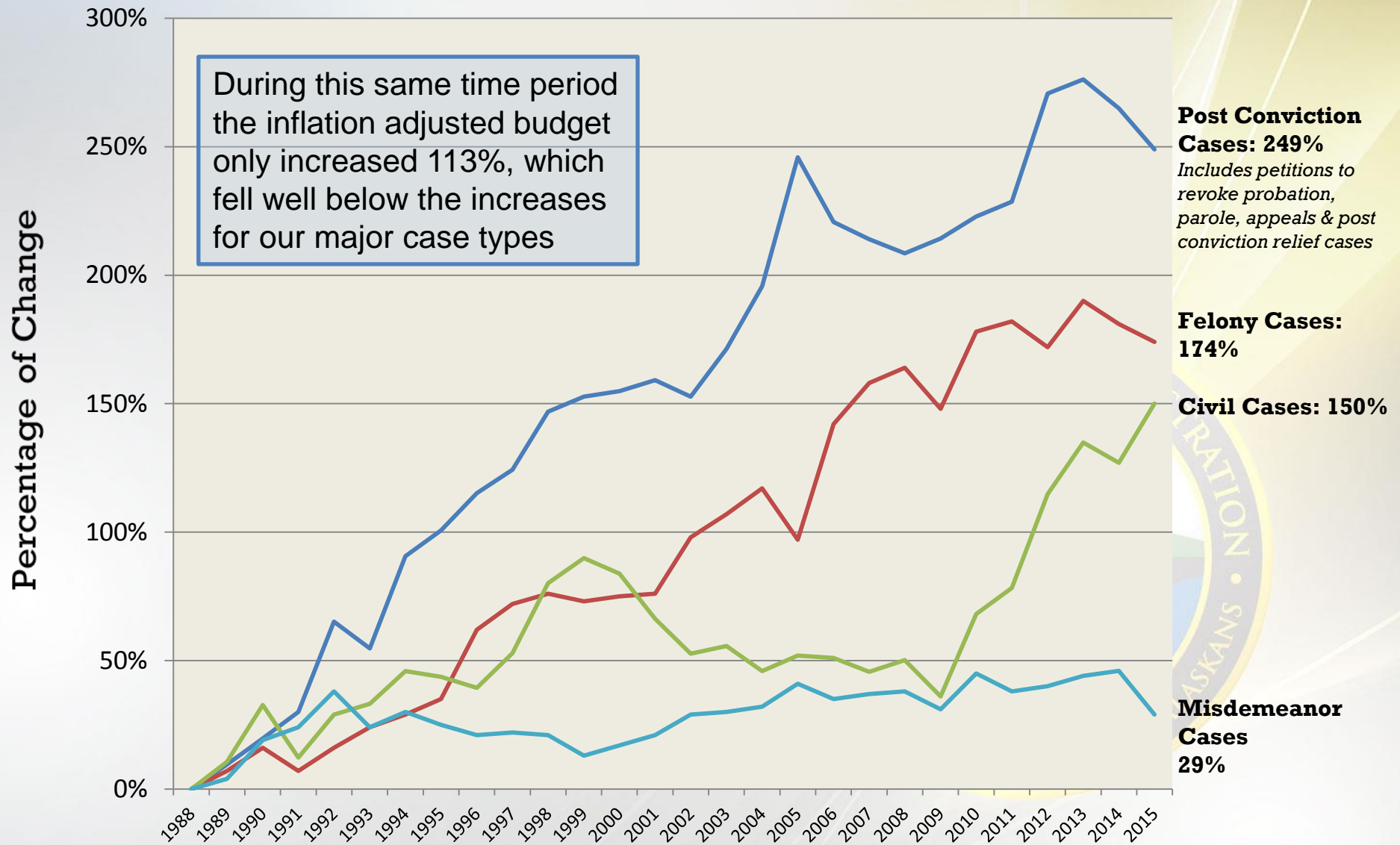


PDA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

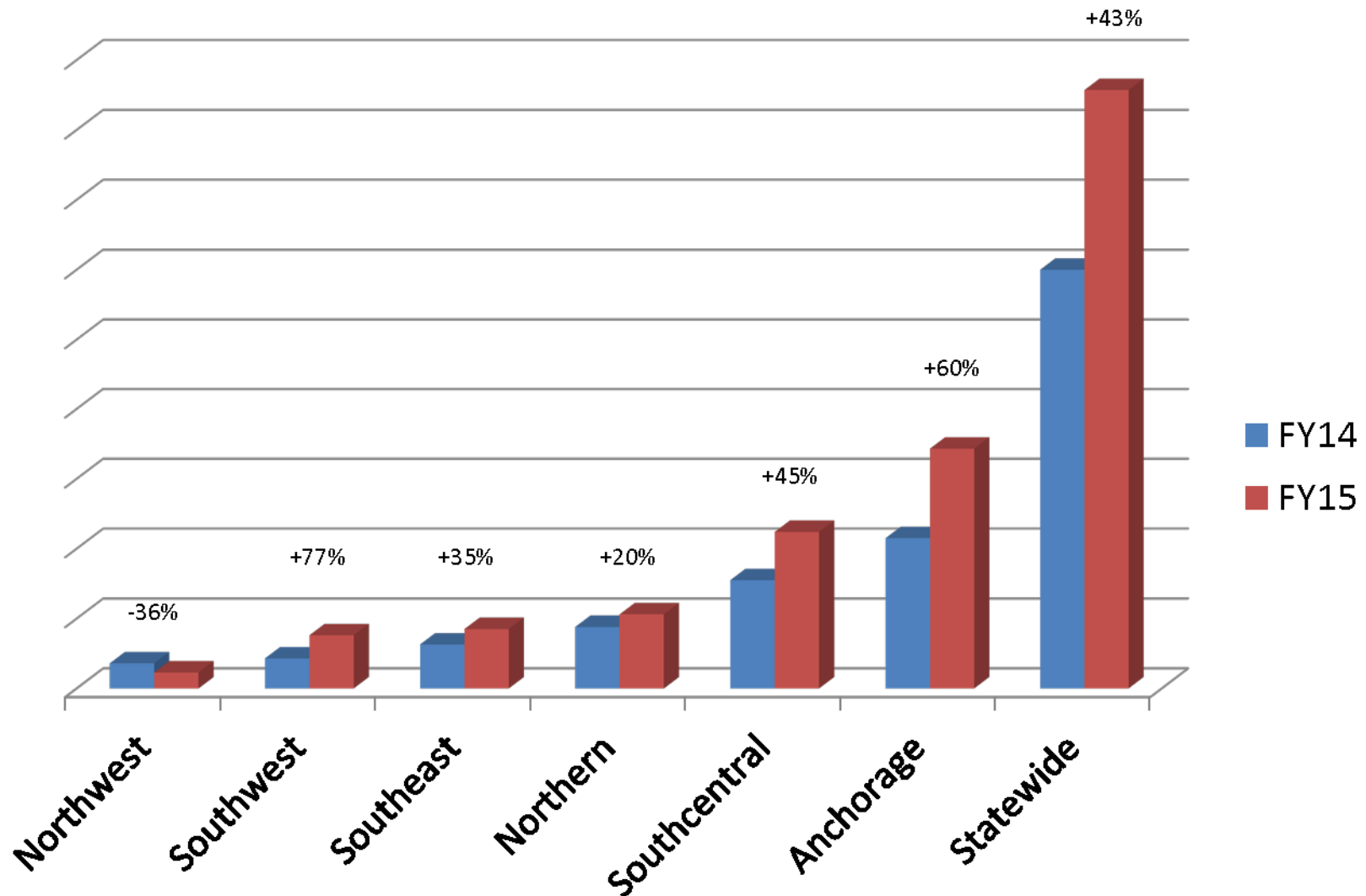
- Creation of centralized case opening section
- Creation of centralized conflict of interest section
- Decreasing appellate backlog & meeting new Court of Appeals filing deadlines
- Cost reductions through held vacancies, service RFPs, employee furloughs, and teleconferencing



PDA HISTORICAL CASELOAD GROWTH



PDA CINA Caseload Growth FY14-FY15



Thank you!

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for more information about our department.

Questions?

