

The International Program – Thailand

U.S. Judicial System

A Project for Thailand



Judicial Watch's Director of Research and Investigation, Chris Farrell, met with the Deputy Commander of Thailand's Metropolitan Police Division on September 9, 2008, at the request of the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program.

The International Program is an integral part of Judicial Watch's educational program. As set forth in its Mission Statement, "through its educational endeavors, Judicial Watch advocates high standards of ethics and morality in our nation's public life and seeks to ensure that political and judicial officials do not abuse the powers entrusted to them by the American people. Judicial Watch fulfills its educational mission through litigation, investigations, and public outreach."

The State Department's professional objectives for the project for Thailand were, in part, to:

- Examine the U.S. federal system of government, the separation of powers, and the powers of government at the federal, state, and local levels;
- Develop an understanding of the U.S. judicial system, including the roles of law enforcement, the courts, alternative dispute resolution, police investigations, and community involvement and oversight; and
- Understand civil rights, civic activism, the role of NGO's, public-private partnerships, and philanthropy in the United States.

The U.S. Department of State's background notes on Thailand reports that "Thailand continues to be a key security ally in Asia, along with Australia, Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea. In December 2003, Thailand was designated a Major Non-NATO Ally."

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Thailand has been, for the most part, considered a “functioning democracy.”

Thailand’s government is organized as a constitutional monarchy and although “King Bhumidol Rama IX—who has been on the throne since 1946—commands enormous popular respect and moral authority,” a movement towards free and fair multi-party elections has been in practice since 1992.

The problem of corruption in government by popularly elected leaders brings new challenges and increasing instability in Thailand, which calls for new and innovative approaches to problem solving in the model of democratic governance.

The Thai delegate expressed a keen interest in learning about the tools used by Judicial Watch, such as federal, state, and local open records laws that promote openness and transparency in government; media exposure to educate the public; and litigation to hold government and elected officials accountable to the rule of law.