



*SUPERIOR COURT OF
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COUNTY OF SOLANO*

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Press Release

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SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SOLANO JOINS IN STATEWIDE BUDGET APPEAL TO THE GOVERNOR

The Superior Court of California, County of Solano, joins with 48 other trial courts to urge Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr., to provide California's trial courts with adequate funding.

In a letter (copy attached) signed by 49 of California's 58 trial courts, Presiding Judges and Court Executive Officers (CEOs) from across the State have joined together in an unprecedented effort to stem the loss of funding for the Judicial Branch.

Hon. Robert C. Fracchia, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Solano County, stated, "since 2009, our trial courts have been consistently forced to perform more significant work with far less resources. Our court staff has been reduced from 265 to 202.5 employees essentially performing the same or greater duties. We are confronted constantly by unfunded mandates from the legislature, a decline in local revenue, an aging infrastructure, all of which places the public's access to timely justice in jeopardy. As Court leaders, we all felt it was critical that our message be delivered without a filter to the Governor and our state representatives."

Hon. Jill Fannin, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Contra Costa County stated that "the proposed budget is terrible for trial courts. It doesn't include any money for cost increases and it doesn't provide backfill for years of declining local revenues."

"It is imperative that the Governor, the Legislature and the public understand the impact of this proposed budget to California's trial courts", said Brian Taylor, CEO of the Superior Court of Solano County. "It is more important now than ever that people have access to the court system. This budget will force courts to close courtrooms, limit clerk's office hours, reduce self-help services and reduce staff. To ensure access to the courts, more funding must be forthcoming."

Stephen H. Nash, CEO of the Superior Court of Contra Costa County, noted that the Governor's proposed budget, which retains funding for the trial courts at the same level as last fiscal year, will result in an overall reduction in the courts' resources. "First the State slashed trial court budgets. Now our local revenues are falling, and once again the Governor proposes

no funding for local court employee cost increases. Court pockets are empty and the cupboards are bare: court staffing is down between 25% and 30% over the last 5 years, and state operations and facility funds are almost depleted. Looking forward, meanwhile, we are told that recession is a possibility and the 'good times' may soon be coming to an end!"

Chad Finke, CEO of the Superior Court of Alameda County, noted that "despite being in a period of state surpluses and record reserves, courts like ours are having to get by with less funding than we had last year. In fact, we are even poorer than we were two years ago. The Governor's budget proposal, if approved, will make next year even worse for the courts. This chronic underfunding of the trial courts means that resources, operations, and services of the courts will continue to erode, and the public's access to justice will be diminished."

Attachment