



# CONSUMER ATTORNEYS OF CALIFORNIA

*Seeking Justice for All*

## Sign of hope for courts in Brown's proposed budget

But with reserves now gone, courts still face severe funding challenge

**SACRAMENTO (Jan. 9, 2014)** – Gov. Jerry Brown's proposed 2014-15 California budget released today included a spending boost for the state's judicial branch, but not enough to prevent further court cuts and closures, according to Consumer Attorneys of California president John M. Feder.

"We are grateful that the governor has added \$105 million to court funding in the proposed budget, which recognizes the severe cuts the courts have endured in recent years and the fundamental need for reinvesting in the judicial system," Feder said. "But the sad truth is just to maintain the status quo our courts need \$250 million in additional funding this year.

"That is because last year the courts spent down \$250 million in reserves to maintain their operations as well as they could. This year, all the reserves are spent. So the governor's proposed budget leaves the courts almost \$150 million short of last year.

"Keep in mind California has seen 51 courthouses and 204 courtrooms closed in the last three years," Feder said. "Most of those closures took place last year, with the snowball effect of six years of budget cuts totaling more than \$1 billion. This year's proposed budget will leave the courts in even worse shape.

"Make no mistake, there will be more court closures, more reductions in service hours and more delays for California citizens and businesses seeking resolution of their disputes," he said.

Feder said that Californians have been living with case delays, long lines for basic courthouse services and long journeys just to access justice if a local courthouse has been shut down by cost cutting.

"The situation is unacceptable and promises to get worse unless we can find a way to increase support of our courts," he said. "As the budget process unfolds, we have our work cut out for us to make that happen."

*Consumer Attorneys of California is a professional organization of plaintiffs' attorneys representing consumers seeking accountability against wrongdoers in cases involving personal injury, product liability, environmental degradation and other causes.*

### **For more information:**

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