



# CONSUMER ATTORNEYS OF CALIFORNIA

*Seeking Justice for All*

## CAOC hails Chief Justice's call for court funds

Group's president agrees increase needed for "justice for all"

**SACRAMENTO (Mar. 17, 2014)** – Consumer Attorneys of California president John M. Feder praised state Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye's State of the Judiciary remarks before the California Legislature this afternoon, saying CAOC joins her in calling on lawmakers to restore adequate funding for the state's court system.

"Our objective at CAOC is 'seeking justice for all,' and our experience over the past six years has shown that is an impossible goal to reach when court budget cuts restrict basic access and services for Californians," Feder said.

California's judicial system has seen \$1.1 billion in General Fund budget cuts over the last six years. Last year saw the closure of 51 courthouses and 205 courtrooms. This year, the governor's budget proposal falls more than \$150 million short of the level needed simply to match the funding trial courts received in 2013-14.

Feder noted that Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye pointed out in her address that court closures have deprived more than two million Californians of access to justice to a local courthouse. Reduced hours and staffing have also hurt public access to many courts that remain open.

"Access to justice is crucial for consumers and business alike to resolve their disputes," Feder said. "But that access has been seriously affected by court budget cuts, and unless we restore adequate funding to our judicial branch we are depriving Californians of a fundamental right. As the Chief Justice mentioned, because of the constitutional protection of criminal cases, those most affected by the cuts are those involved in civil cases, such as domestic violence protection, family law and foster care issues.

"We will continue to work alongside the Chief Justice to advocate for California's courts to receive sufficient funding to provide 'justice for all.'"

*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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