



CONSUMER ATTORNEYS OF CALIFORNIA

Seeking Justice for All

CAOC calls for restoration of court funding

Kabateck: In "give and take," courts have already given plenty

SACRAMENTO (May 14, 2013) – California consumers and businesses will suffer with no new funding for the state's judicial system under Gov. Jerry Brown's revised state budget released today, according to Consumer Attorneys of California.

"The governor talked this morning about a 'give and take' with the Legislature during budget negotiations in the weeks ahead," said CAOC President Brian Kabateck. "Well, the courts have already given to the tune of \$1.1 billion in general fund revenue lost since 2007. That's why courthouses are closing and trials are being delayed and important services are being denied. It's time for the state to start giving back to the courts. It's time for lawmakers to understand that we need to start restoring this cornerstone of our democracy."

A [recent survey](#) of state Superior Court officials found at least 61 courthouses in the state have been closed or are slated for closure, at least 175 courtrooms have been closed, at least 16 courts have closed one or more locations where traffic cases are heard, and at least 20 counties have announced furlough days this year, with courts there closed on average more than one day a month. There also have been widespread reductions in the hours public windows are open and in court self-help services.

The impact is greatest on our state's most vulnerable citizens, Kabateck said. "The courts provide basic human services to all Californians," he said. "Our civil courts serve women seeking protection from domestic violence, veterans struggling with addiction and adjustment after serving our country, children asking to be adopted by loving and caring parents, tenants living in uninhabitable apartments, citizens who expect our police and safety officers to be on the streets instead of waiting all day for a case to be heard in some remote courthouse."

In a bid to stem the tide of red ink, Kabateck and other CAOC leaders and members have been meeting in recent months with legislators to explain the importance of the courts and the need for restoration of the funding that has been steadily slashed over the past six budget years.

"A nation of laws cannot function without the administration of justice," Kabateck said. "And the administration of justice in California is slowly but surely grinding to a halt."

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.

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