



# CONSUMER ATTORNEYS OF CALIFORNIA

*Seeking Justice for All*

## CAOC works to promote court funding

Association members meet with lawmakers, judges

**SACRAMENTO (Mar. 4, 2013)** – Consumer Attorneys of California has launched a coordinated push by its members to take the case for better court funding directly to lawmakers and other state officials who will make the decisions that can help California consumers and businesses maintain access to the justice system.

CAOC President Brian Kabateck said more than 60 member attorneys have met or scheduled meetings with more than two dozen legislators, “and that outreach effort continues to grow.” He said the association’s goal is to meet with all 120 members of the Legislature.

Kabateck has personally met with Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg and Assembly Speaker John Pérez to emphasize the importance of boosting court funding. CAOC legislative advocates have met with Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Noreen Evans, Assembly Judiciary Committee Chair Bob Wieckowski, key budget leaders such as Assemblyman Reggie Jones-Sawyer and state Finance Director Ana Matosantos to explain the consequences if the underfunding of our judiciary system continues. In addition, individual CAOC members are meeting with presiding judges of local superior courts to help better understand the challenges they face and be able to share that message with lawmakers.

“This is an issue we take extremely seriously,” Kabateck said. “That’s why we have taken the lead in the effort to restore adequate support for our courts. We hope other organizations will join us in seeking the additional state funding needed to keep our courts accessible to all.”

CAOC is pushing for state lawmakers to reject a budget proposal to slash \$200 million in court construction money and instead begin restoring some of the \$1.1 billion in general fund revenue cut over the past five years. Those reductions spawned the closure of 46 courthouses and 164 courtrooms around the state as well as the layoffs of nearly 2,000 court employees. The result has been long lines for court services during limited hours and, in some counties, marathon trips to access the courts that remain open.

“Our courts are essential to ensure a society that is fair to everyone,” Kabateck said. “We need to start treating our judicial system like the equal third branch of government it is.”

*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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