



Sent via U.S. mail and facsimile

February 16, 2017

Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

We, the undersigned courts, have had the opportunity to review your proposed budget for the judicial branch for Fiscal Year 2017-18. We are seriously concerned with the lack of additional funding proposed for trial court operations and our ability to provide adequate access to justice for those in need of California's court system.

While we understand the reasons stated in your proposed budget for not providing ongoing additional resources to the judicial branch, we wish to inform you and the Legislature about the impact this proposed budget will have not only on the many trial courts throughout the state but, more importantly, on the communities that we serve. We provide this information to you as a supplement to the information provided to you by Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye and the Judicial Council of California as we join and support their efforts to seek additional funding for the judicial branch.

Without an increase in funding over last year, this proposed budget will result in a net decrease to our court budgets from this current fiscal year. This is due to, among other things, the rising cost of doing business in California (e.g., utility costs, rents, vendor expenses, employee salaries). It also results from governmental actions such as elimination of Proposition 47 funding, additional workload from voter-approved initiatives such as Propositions 57 and 64, legislative changes such as AB 2839 that considerably increase workload without accompanying offsetting funding and the proposed elimination of a court's ability to place a hold on a traffic defendant's driver's license for failure to pay or appear, the latter of which appears to have the unintended consequence of reducing revenues to the trial courts, counties and the state. In Solano and Contra Costa, two courts that have imposed a moratorium on driver's license holds, both courts have seen an approximate 25% reduction in collections. To put it simply, as our

expenses rise and our external revenues decrease, any annual budget that does not contain an offsetting increase is, in very real terms, a budget cut for the courts and a reduction in access to justice for Californians.

With no additional ongoing funding proposed in the budget for the trial courts, many courts will be required to layoff or furlough staff, reduce hours and/or eliminate programs in order to balance their budgets. Indeed, this has already begun: the Superior Court of Alameda County recently was forced largely to close its doors for a week, and has indefinitely shortened its clerk's office hours. Other courts will soon follow suit.

We note that on July 1, 2017, Executive Branch employees will receive a wage increase. Court funding should be adequate to ensure trial courts are able to provide employees equitable pay increases, and the public deserves courts that are appropriately staffed and able to recruit and retain staff to perform the critical functions that we fulfill. These outcomes will not occur if the budget is adopted as proposed. Currently, there is no funding proposed in your budget for discretionary spending for the trial courts, which means that our courts are unable to provide minimal wage increases or address other cost increases without cutting other important operations.

We respectfully request that the trial courts be treated in an equitable fashion with the Executive Branch and that the trial courts be funded with a modest annual increase. An increase of \$158.5 million—which is the amount requested by the Judicial Council to address baseline cost increases, but which was not included in the Governor's Budget for next fiscal year—would allow us to keep pace with rising costs of doing business in California and, more importantly, allow courts to preserve the public's access to justice.

Sincerely,

Superior Court of California, County of Alameda
Hon. Morris D. Jacobson, Presiding Judge /s/
Chad Finke, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Amador
Hon. Steve Hermanson, Presiding Judge /s/
Rob Klotz, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Butte
Hon. Robert A. Glusman, Presiding Judge /s/
Kimberly Flener, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Calaveras
Hon. Grant V. Barrett, Presiding Judge /s/
Karen Camper, Interim Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Colusa
Jason B. Galkin, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Contra Costa
Hon. Jill C. Fannin, Presiding Judge /s/
Stephen H. Nash, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Del Norte
Hon. William Follett, Presiding Judge /s/
Sandra Linderman, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of El Dorado
Hon. Suzanne Kingsbury, Presiding Judge /s/
Tania G. Ugrin-Capobianco, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Glenn
Hon. Donald Cole Byrd, Presiding Judge /s/
Kevin Harrigan, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Inyo
Hon. Dean T. Stout, Presiding Judge /s/
Pamela M. Foster, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Kings
Hon. Steven D. Barnes, Presiding Judge /s/
Jeff Lewis, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Lake
Hon. Andrew S. Blum, Presiding Judge /s/
Krista LeVier, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Lassen
Hon. Michele Verderosa, Presiding Judge /s/
Andi Barone, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles
Hon. Daniel Buckley, Presiding Judge /s/
Sherri Carter, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Madera
Hon. Joseph Soldani, Presiding Judge /s/
Bonnie Thomas, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Marin
Hon. Kelly V. Simmons, Presiding Judge /s/
James Kim, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Mariposa
Hon. F. Dana Walton, Presiding Judge /s/
Cynthia J. Busse, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Mendocino
Hon. John A. Behnke, Presiding Judge /s/
Chris Ruhl, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Merced
Hon. Donald Proietti, Presiding Judge /s/
Linda Romero-Soles, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Modoc
Hon. Francis W. Barclay, Presiding Judge /s/
Ronda Gysin, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Mono
Hon. Mark Magit, Presiding Judge /s/
Hector Gonzalez, Jr., Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Monterey
Hon. Mark E. Hood, Presiding Judge /s/
Teresa A. Risi, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Napa
Hon. Mark S. Boessenecker, Presiding Judge /s/
Richard D. Feldstein, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Nevada
Hon. B. Scott Thomsen, Presiding Judge /s/
G. Sean Metroka, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Placer
Hon. Alan V. Pineschi, Presiding Judge /s/
Jake Chatters, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Plumas
Hon. Janet Hilde, Presiding Judge /s/
Deborah Norrie, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Riverside
Hon. Becky L. Dugan, Presiding Judge /s/
Samuel Hamrick, Jr., Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of San Benito
Hon. Steven R. Sanders, Presiding Judge /s/
Gil Solorio, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino
Hon. Raymond L. Haight, III, Presiding Judge /s/
Nancy Eberhardt, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of San Diego
Hon. Jeffrey B. Barton, Presiding Judge /s/
Michael Roddy, Chief Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of San Francisco
Hon. Teri L. Jackson, Presiding Judge /s/
T. Michael Yuen, Chief Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of San Joaquin
Hon. Jose L. Alva, Presiding Judge /s/
Rosa Junqueiro, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of San Luis Obispo
Hon. Barry LaBarbera, Presiding Judge /s/
Michael Powell, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo
Hon. Susan Irene Etezadi, Presiding Judge /s/
Rodina Catalano, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Santa Barbara
Hon. Patricia Kelly, Presiding Judge /s/
Darrel Parker, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara
Hon. Patricia Lucas, Presiding Judge /s/
Rebecca Fleming, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Santa Cruz
Hon. Denine Guy, Presiding Judge /s/
Alex Calvo, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Shasta
Hon. Gary G. Gibson, Presiding Judge /s/
Melissa Fowler-Bradley, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Sierra
Hon. Charles H. Ervin, Presiding Judge /s/
Lee Kirby, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Siskiyou
Hon. William J. Davis, Presiding Judge /s/
Renee McCanna Crane, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Solano
Hon. Robert C. Fracchia, Presiding Judge /s/
Brian K. Taylor, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Sonoma
Hon. Raima Ballinger, Presiding Judge /s/
Jose Guillen, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Stanislaus
Hon. Ricardo Cordova, Presiding Judge /s/
Ronna Uliana, Interim Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Sutter
Hon. Brian R. Aronson, Presiding Judge /s/
Stephanie M. Hansel, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Trinity
Hon. Elizabeth W. Johnson, Presiding Judge /s/
Staci Holliday, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Tulare
Hon. Bret Hillman, Presiding Judge /s/
LaRayne Cleek, Interim Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Ventura
Hon. Patricia V. Murphy, Presiding Judge /s/
Michael D. Planet, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Yolo
Hon. Janet Gaard, Presiding Judge /s/
Shawn C. Landry, Court Executive Officer /s/

Superior Court of California, County of Yuba
Hon. Debra L. Givens, Presiding Judge /s/
Bonnie Sloan, Court Executive Officer /s/

cc:

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