

February 26, 2015 budget hearing
Chip Administrative Judge Audette's written statement

of employees to higher positions, allowing us to put into place the court system's next generation of supervisors and leaders.

The budget increase that we received for the current fiscal year has started the courts on the road to recovery, and has allowed us to address the worst of the impacts caused by the years of no-growth budgets. It is essential that in the coming fiscal year we continue to move forward and not lose any of the ground that we have achieved.

In the coming year, we again face increased costs, including the costs of contractually-required increments for nonjudicial employees, collectively bargained raises, the annualized costs related to the new Family and City Court judgeships established, and various increases in other contractual obligations, such as contracts with local law enforcement agencies to provide court security in certain parts of the state. We are seeking an increase in our budget so we can meet these new costs without losing ground and returning to a budget that is premised on the need to reduce our workforce to make ends meet.



Consistent with our long-standing commitment to work with the other branches of state government to hold the line on spending growth, we are limiting our request to a two percent increase, the same growth to which the Executive and Legislative Branches have been held to in the state budget over the past few years. We are seeking cash funding of \$1.85 billion for General Fund State Operations to support court operations, which represents an increase of \$36.3 million, or two percent.

The modest increase that we are requesting, along with our ongoing search for savings and efficiencies, will allow us to build on the progress that we have accomplished