

**Statement of
Judge Barbara M. Quinn
Chief Court Administrator**

**Comment on approved legislation that exempts the Judicial Branch
from the “OE to 2007 levels” cut (HB 7006)**

We are extremely disappointed that the Governor vetoed Bill 7006, one of the budget implementing bills recently passed. This bill would have limited the amount of cuts that could be made to the Judicial Branch’s operating budget this year. Such limitation has been portrayed as “unconscionable.” This characterization is both unwarranted and untrue.

This cut imposes upon the Judicial Branch a disproportionate share of the statewide savings needed, while exempting many Executive Branch agencies from similar cuts. This cut impacts the Judicial Branch account that pays for essential medical care and food for kids in our care. There is no way for the Judicial Branch to absorb this reduction because of its size and the nature of the expenses in the account. However, we have been and will continue to cut expenses wherever we can.

As a result of this veto, we must close not fewer than three courthouses and significantly reduce the funding for legal services for the poor and services to victims of domestic violence. This reduction also will harm children because it is going to significantly reduce existing services and eliminate or dramatically reduce new services that are part of the “Raise the Age” initiative. Even with these significant reductions and court closings, we will still have a budget shortfall at the end of the fiscal year that will need to be addressed by the Executive and Legislative Branches.

Since the state’s fiscal crisis began, we have been full participants in saving money in all areas of the Branch and have absorbed tens of millions of dollars of cuts. We will continue to work at all opportunities with our colleagues in the other Branches to save money and find economies wherever possible. However, implementing a reduction of this magnitude is impossible.