



International Brotherhood of Police Officers

A DIVISION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

TO: MEMBERS OF THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

FROM: JOSEPH GAETANO, PRESIDENT
JUDICIAL MARSHALS UNION, IBPO LOCAL 731

DATE: FEBRUARY 19, 2016

PLEASE MAINTAIN THE JUDIAL DEPARTMENT BUDGET TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE

Our union currently represents 700 men and women who serve in our courthouses, prisoner lockup facilities and prisoner transport units across the state of Connecticut.

In the past, we have had as many as 900 Judicial Marshals providing protection across our judicial system, but due to attrition and budget shortfalls, we have lost 200 Judicial Marshals.

At the same time that we have been losing Judicial Marshals, our courthouses have become increasingly busy. Thousands of people are entering our courthouses every day; and we believe that we are now at a critical juncture where the potential security risks in our system are starting to exceed the current number of Judicial Marshals' ability to provide the highest quality protections and services. Earlier this week, the Courthouse in Danielson was evacuated and closed down during to a security threat; and there was another recent incident where Judge Bozzuto's life was threatened by an upset family court litigant. Every day we should all be working together to make our courthouses safe places for every person present their arguments to our judges.

We hear Governor Malloy's and the Legislature's message loud-and-clear that our government's core functions must be maintained and strengthened, even during these difficult budgetary times. A safe and efficient judicial system is absolutely a core function in a civilized and humane society.

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) states on its website:

Because courthouses must be accessible and in centralized locations, they are vulnerable to acts of random violence. Courts must have proper court security procedures, technology, personnel, and architectural features, to not only protect the safety of the people and the property within and around the courts, but also the integrity of the judicial process.

Connecticut's dedicated Judicial Marshals respectfully request Governor Malloy and the Legislature to work hard to maintain the Judicial Branch funding to the greatest extent possible. We cannot invite people to address their grievances in our civil courts, and we cannot require people accused of crimes to come to our criminal courts to answer the State's claims and defend themselves, unless we can ensure that all of these people will be safe and ensure that their cases will be handled fairly and efficiently.

Thank you.