

COMMENTARY OF THE GOVERNOR ON THE JUDICIARY

In accordance with Article VII, Section 1 of the New York State Constitution, I transmit herewith the appropriations requested by the Judiciary for fiscal year 2015-16. As required by the Constitution, I present the Judiciary budget as it has been submitted by the Chief Judge.

The Judiciary has requested appropriations of \$2.1 billion for court operations, exclusive of the cost of employee benefits. As submitted, disbursements for court operations from the General Fund are projected to grow by \$45.3 million or 2.5 percent.

For the past four years my Administration and the Legislature have kept spending increases below 2 percent. I recognize the increased burdens placed on the Judiciary with the creation of new family court positions and the costs associated with administering those courts. This is in addition to other responsibilities taken on by the Judiciary that broaden the provision of legal services to those who cannot afford them.

I believe, and based on conversations with the Office of Court Administration and its leadership the Judiciary believes, that it can provide those services and still not breach the 2 percent spending cap to which my Administration and the Legislature have adhered. To that end, I have been assured by the Judiciary that it will work closely with my Administration to find the additional savings that will allow it to fulfil its mission, achieve its goals and still stay within that cap. I urge the Judiciary to continue its discussions with my Administration and the Legislature and thank them for their cooperation.