

## News Release

For Immediate Release

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### **DRI – The Voice of the Defense Bar Urges Congress To Provide Emergency Funding For The Federal Judiciary**

**CHICAGO – May 16, 2013** – DRI’s Center for Law and Public Policy is urging Congress to ease the crisis in the federal courts by supporting a request by the U.S. Judicial Conference and the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts for an emergency appropriation of \$73 million. The 50-year old DRI with 22,000 members is the largest professional organization exclusively representing the defense bar.

In a letter to Congressional leaders, DRI president Mary Massaron Ross said that “budget cuts have forced diminished court staffing, court closures, compromised security, and lengthy trial delays. This, of course, means that justice is delayed. Since criminal trials must take priority, already lengthy delays in civil trials become even longer. Perhaps thousands of businesses will not survive the abeyance of lengthy uncertainty over the outcome of litigation. We talk of the effect on justice, we talk of the effect on businesses but, at bottom, it is people’s lives that are adversely changed.”

The emergency funding would replace only a small portion of the dramatic \$350 million in funding reductions imposed upon the courts by sequestration. Over the past several months, Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Anthony Kennedy and Stephen Breyer have spoken out regarding the negative impact of the cuts on the administration of justice.

In his 2012 year-end report, Roberts stated

*“Virtually all of the Judiciary’s core functions are constitutionally and statutorily mandated. Unlike executive branch agencies, the courts do not have discretionary programs they can eliminate or projects they can postpone. The courts must resolve all criminal and civil cases that fall within their jurisdiction, often under tight time constraints. A significant and prolonged shortfall in judicial funding would inevitably result in the delay or denial of justice for the people the courts serve.”*

Marc Williams, Chairman of DRI’s Center for Law and Public Policy, said “This is more than a budgetary

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issue; it is also a constitutional issue. The courts are charged with very certain responsibilities under the Constitution. At some point, you have to say that those responsibilities are being abrogated for lack of funding.”

The full text of the letter can be found [here](#).

### **About DRI – The Voice of the Defense Bar**

*For more than fifty years, DRI has been the voice of the defense bar, advocating for 22,000 defense attorneys, commercial trial attorneys, and corporate counsel and defending the integrity of the civil judiciary. A thought leader, DRI provides world-class legal education, deep expertise for policy-makers, legal resources, and networking opportunities to facilitate career and law firm growth. For more information, log on to [www.dri.org](http://www.dri.org)*