



## News Release

For Immediate Release

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### **22,000 Member DRI Backs Federal Chief Judges' Funding Request**

**CHICAGO – (September 9, 2013)**— DRI – The Voice of the Defense Bar and its Center for Law and Public Policy have endorsed a letter sent to Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. last month by the Chief Judges of 87 federal district courts. In that letter, the judges petitioned the Vice President in his role as president of the Senate to support sufficient funding levels for federal courts that would relieve them of the crisis in which they have been placed by past funding cuts and the effects of sequestration.

Those effects cited by the judges include loss and furloughing of staff, threats to security at courthouses, public endangerment in the reduction of probation and pre-trial services officers, and severe staff shortages that have resulted in “slower processing of civil and bankruptcy cases which impacts individuals and businesses seeking to resolve disputes in the federal courts.” They declared that, “further cuts would directly affect our ability to carry out our constitutional and statutory duties.”

In its own letter to the Vice President, DRI, representing 22,000 defense attorneys of the civil justice system, emphasized the growing crisis in the civil courts. DRI president Mary Massaron Ross and Marc Williams, Chair of DRI’s Center for Law and Public Policy said, “For civil cases, which must yield precedence to criminal ones, the reductions can easily mean hardship for the litigants and an enormous increase in the costs associated with pursuing one’s day in court.”

The cuts are forcing the courts to decide who is provided justice and who is denied it through unreasonable delay; which essential section of the judicial structure is considered non-essential for budget purposes; which courts get physical protection and which do not; and which businesses will fail for lack of access to justice.

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The DRI letter declared that, “a more permanent solution must be found through a consensus of the three branches. Justice should not be held hostage to the political and budgetary battles between the other two branches.” Massaron Ross and Williams pledged DRI’s support “for a more permanent and inviolable source of funding for the only branch of government charged by the Constitution to provide justice for the American people.”

See the full text of the DRI letter [here](#).

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**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).*