



April 19, 2016

Hon. Carl E. Heastie
LOB, Room 932
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Speaker Heastie:

Recently, the NYS Commission on Legislative, Judicial and Executive Compensation voted to recommend an increase in state judge's salaries in 2016 and 2018. Without objection by the State, the recommendations became law on April 1, 2016.

Of concern to county government is the state law that links District Attorney salaries to judicial salaries. Historically, when the State has adjusted the judicial salaries, it has reimbursed counties for the increase in DA salaries through the State Budget. Unfortunately, the recently enacted state budget does not cover the recent increases.

The New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) and the District Attorneys Association of the State of New York (DAASNY) hereby requests the State to reimburse the counties for the increases associated with the recent state judicial salary increase.

We recognize that county officials perform many essential public functions of state and local concern. Perhaps no county service is more essential than ensuring law and order in our communities, which is upheld by our local prosecutors. DAs are entitled to the fair and just compensation pursuant to law for fulfilling the state constitutional and statutory duties related to the enforcement of the State Penal Law. However, any state mandated increase to a local government official's salary, as a matter of equity and fairness, must be met by the State.

While it is unfortunate that the projected \$1.6 million cost for DA salary increases was not included in the State's over \$150 billion budget, it is not too late to correct this oversight. While the \$1.6 million may seem miniscule in the face of a \$150 billion spending plan, it amounts to a significant portion of a county's allowable tax growth under the state-imposed property tax cap.

Recognizing that the DA salary increase is a new state mandated cost to counties, both NYSAC and DAASNY urge you to enact legislation that provides that the State reimburse the counties for this new expense.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William E. Cherry
NYSAC President

Thomas Zugibe, Esq.
President of DAASNY