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**COURTS AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST:
A CALL FOR SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES**

The court system is part of a judiciary that serves as a pillar along with two other separate but equally important pillars, represented by the executive and legislative branches of government, upon which the democratic framework of the United States rests. Using this metaphor, the notion of the public interest is examined and tied to judicial functions and the role that courts serve in a society. While the authority for courts can be found in federal and state constitutions and legal doctrine, the importance of funding court functions is often overlooked. The Constitutional claim for sustainable resources along with other widely recognized standards are explained with a further emphasis on three court funding models characterized as local funding systems, state-funded systems, and fee-based funding systems. Research regarding gubernatorial priorities as expressed in 2002 State of the State Addresses and the relationship of those priorities to state and local courts is considered. Perhaps not surprisingly, the results of this review of governors' addresses seem to indicate that the role of courts is rarely considered when gubernatorial policies are expressed. Finally, recommendations are made in an effort to improve opportunities for additional resources including some innovative approaches.

This [research paper](#) is available in its entirety in portable document format. To access, you must first obtain and install the Adobe Acrobat Reader



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