

MEDIA RELEASE

NSW BAR ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS CHIEF JUSTICE ON COURT FUNDING



1 February 2024

The NSW Bar Association supports calls from the Chief Justice of New South Wales, the Hon Andrew Bell, for increased funding of the New South Wales court system.

At the Law Society's Opening of Law Term Dinner, the Chief Justice observed that the court system "must be properly valued and funded by the Executive".

"The New South Wales judiciary enjoys high levels of public trust because its officers act with integrity, competence, and diligence," said Dr Ruth Higgins SC, President of the NSW Bar Association.

"The Chief Justice rightly described the work undertaken by the judiciary as an 'essential service'. Such a service needs sufficient funding to flourish and succeed. Without such funding, the ever-increasing workload expected of the judiciary is, as the Chief Justice said, 'unsustainable.'"

"The administration of justice is ultimately a cooperative endeavour among all those who participate within it: judges, court staff, practitioners, and litigants. Inadequate resourcing adversely affects the quality of access to justice and its outcomes, including for victims of crime, and the wellbeing of judges and practitioners."

"The New South Wales court system must be strong, independent, and properly resourced," said Dr Higgins SC.

The NSW Bar Association has consistently advocated for increased funding for courts and tribunals. The Association's policy statement prior to the 2023 New South Wales state election urged "all political parties to provide the necessary funding to our courts and tribunals to ensure that the justice system functions efficiently". Such funding would facilitate more permanent appointments to the Local, District, and Supreme Courts and upgrades to court infrastructure, including in relation to court technology and accessibility for persons with a disability.

Media contact: Edward Clapin, 0491 844 487, eclapin@nswbar.asn.au