



## ATTORNEY GENERAL GEORGE JEPSEN

### ATTORNEY GENERAL: CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTION EFFORTS BENEFIT CONNECTICUT FAMILIES IN NEED

*For Immediate Release*

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HARTFORD – While the economy is pushing more children into poverty, state child support collection efforts brought in more than \$300 million last fiscal year to help thousands of children in families in need, Attorney General George Jepsen said today.

“Most of the money brought in goes to custodial parents. Our efforts on behalf of dependent children help to pay the rent, keep the lights on and put food on the table. The needs are real and we work very hard to help. The state is doing a great job with the limited resources available,” Attorney General Jepsen said.

August is National Child Support Enforcement Month and Jepsen credited the work of Connecticut’s child support framework, which includes the Attorney General’s Child Support/Collections Unit; the Connecticut Department of Social Services - Bureau of Child Support Enforcement and the Judicial Department’s Support Enforcement Services.

The total collections, for the fiscal year ended June 30, benefitted both families receiving public assistance and those who do not, but who ask the state’s help in enforcing the child-support court orders.

Collections brought in \$250 million on behalf of Connecticut children, more than \$200 million of which was paid directly to families, and \$40 million to the state in reimbursement for public assistance benefits. Another \$50 million was collected for custodial parents living outside Connecticut.

The payments were the result of child support-related orders establishing paternity, current support, arrearages owed to custodial parents or the State, income withholding, medical insurance, unreimbursed medical expenses and daycare.

Some orders are paid voluntarily by the non-custodial parent, or involuntarily through wage garnishment, in-court contempt proceedings, intercepts of federal and state tax refunds; support liens on an absent parent’s personal injury or workers compensation proceeds, unemployment benefits or lottery winnings.

Without this help, more families would likely need to seek state assistance, Jepsen said. Key economic factors show more children are being pushed into poverty in Connecticut. The recent

2011 KIDS COUNT report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation showed that 30 percent, or 233,000 children in Connecticut, were living in single-parent families in 2009. Also, 10 percent, or more than 86,000 children in Connecticut were living in families with income below the federal poverty level of \$21,756 for a family of four.

The Attorney General's Child Support/ Collections Unit completed nearly 9,000 cases in the fiscal year and more than 15,000 cases are pending.

Despite the successes, there are still many cases where child support orders are issued but cannot be easily enforced because the non-custodial parent cannot be found, is not working or doesn't own property that can be attached, Jepsen said.

Jepsen recognized the work of all the attorneys and staff within the Child Support/ Collections Unit, led by Assistant Attorney General Sean Kehoe, the department head.

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