



Federal Bar Association

April 18, 2014

The Honorable Tom Udall
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Financial Services and General Government
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Financial Services and General Government
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: FY 2015 Funding Request of the Federal Judiciary

Dear Chairman Udall and Ranking Member Johanns:

We write on behalf of the Federal Bar Association to express strong support for the federal Judiciary's FY 2015 funding request. We urge the Congress to make the federal judicial system a high priority and provide the funds necessary for the federal courts to fulfill their constitutional and statutory responsibilities. This is important work, vital to the health of our nation, its people and our economy.

Our association's membership of over 16,000 attorneys represents a major constituency of the federal court system. Our members witness the daily need for adequate funding for the federal courts through their reliance on the courts to fairly and promptly administer justice. Their clients, whether defendants or plaintiffs, enter the courts in civil and criminal disputes with the same expectations.

We are deeply appreciative of your Subcommittee's past support for the federal courts and your vigilance to assure that the necessary resources are made available to permit them to fulfill their constitutional and statutory responsibilities as a co-equal branch of government. The funding that Congress has made available to the federal courts in FY 2014 will help to stabilize their financial position and operations after the devastating impact of sequestration a year earlier. Sequestration caused deep cuts in court staffing and operating budgets, with serious implications for the administration of justice. Thankfully, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 provided the Judiciary with a 5.1 percent increase in discretionary appropriations above the FY 2013 sequestration level, essentially restoring the federal Judiciary to pre-sequestration funding levels and permitting the reversal of the emergency measures imposed by sequestration.

Nonetheless, the spending constraints imposed by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 will impose real challenges upon the federal Judiciary and difficult funding decisions for Congress in the days ahead. We ask your Subcommittee to take into account the importance of the work performed by the Judicial Branch and the commendable actions the Judiciary continues to undertake to contain costs and implement more efficient ways to administer justice. A visible need remains for construction in a small number of courthouse projects and security improvements, including the

continuance of the Judiciary's *Capital Security Program* within the General Services Administration's Federal Buildings Fund to address security deficiencies in existing courthouse buildings where physical, interior alterations are viable.

We of the federal bar are committed to doing everything we can to continue to support the Judiciary's efforts to conserve funds and be good stewards of taxpayer resources. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely yours,



Karen Silberman
Executive Director



W. West Allen
Chair, Committee on Government Relations

cc: Members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
The Honorable Julia S. Gibbons, Chair, Judicial Conference Committee on the Budget
The Honorable John D. Bates, Director, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts