



Government Relations Update

The Latest on Public Policy and Advocacy Developments from the Federal Bar Association

June 2024

Advocacy Update

On June 13, 2024, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted to send the JUDGES Act ([S. 2759](#)) to the full Senate for consideration. As the need to relieve our overburdened federal courts has been one of the FBA's top priorities for many years and a focus of FBA's Capitol Hill Day advocacy, FBA is pleased to see this legislation advance. In order to garner sufficient support, the timing of the new judgeships was changed via an amendment which was unanimously adopted. As approved by the Judiciary Committee, the 66 new district court judgeships would be authorized to be added in 6 groups over 10 years, rather than in two groups, one in 2025 and one in 2029, as provided in the original draft. FBA has tweeted its thanks and is also contacting each Senator on the Judiciary Committee to express the Association's appreciation. FBA will continue to work toward full Senate passage of the JUDGES Act and to encourage the House Judiciary Committee to take up the judgeships legislation pending in that Chamber -- the Federal Judgeship Act of 2024 ([H.R. 7597](#)). Please be on the lookout for requests for outreach to your elected representatives!

Post-Capitol Hill Day follow-up on other FBA priorities continues also, with substantial efforts over the past month having been directed toward supporting robust appropriations for the federal courts. In addition to the appropriations request forms many FBA members submitted to their elected representatives, on behalf of the FBA as a whole, FBA President Jonathan Hafén signed letters to the Chairs and Ranking Members of both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and the Appropriations Subcommittees with jurisdiction over the various courts' budgets, urging their support for the Article III and the Article I courts' requested amounts. And two judges briefed House Commerce, Justice and Science (CJS) Appropriations Subcommittee majority Members about the importance of providing funding for implementation of the Department of Justice (DoJ) grant program authorized by the Daniel Aderl Act.

Legislative Update

Appropriations for the Judiciary

On June 13, the House Appropriations Committee approved its Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) Appropriations bill for FY 2025. The bill provides \$8.804 billion for the Judiciary, which is \$554.6 million below the FY25 Budget Request but \$173.9 million above the FY24 enacted level. It supports an increase in funding for the Supreme Court Police to provide residential protection for the Justices. The bill also states that funds made available under the

Court Security heading “may be used for managing a Judiciary-wide program to facilitate security and emergency management services among the Judiciary, United States Marshals Service, Federal Protective Service, General Services Administration, other Federal agencies, state and local governments and the public; and for purposes authorized by the Daniel Aderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act of 2022.”

The text of the CJS bill, which funds the DoJ, has not yet been released, but FBA has been urging Congress to provide \$10 million for the DoJ grant program authorized by the Daniel Aderl Act, as requested in the President’s FY2025 Budget Request. The text should be released a few days before the Subcommittee markup, which is scheduled for June 26. The full Appropriations Committee is scheduled to consider the bill on July 9.

Independent Immigration Court

There are no developments to report at this time regarding the Real Courts, Rule of Law Act ([H.R. 7724](#)).

Foundation of the Federal Bar Association Charter Amendments Act

Senator Kennedy’s staff continues working with the FBA to address concerns driving Senator Cotton’s hold on the Charter Amendments bill ([S. 2694](#)).

Judiciary Update

[Forty-six](#) of 890 active federal judicial positions, including the United States Court of Federal Claims and the United States territorial courts, are currently vacant. Twenty-six more judicial vacancies are [expected](#) through January of 2025, with ten nominees named in advance.

Current Judicial Vacancies – As of June 14, 2024
[According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts](#)

| Court | Vacancies | Nominees Pending |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Supreme Court | 0 | 0 |
| Courts of Appeal | 1 | 1 |
| District Courts | 44 | 15 |
| US Court of Federal Claims | 1 | 1 |
| US Ct of International Trade | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 46 | 17 |

There are [twelve judicial vacancy emergencies](#), based on caseload and/or the length of the vacancy, according to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

Judicial Confirmations: The Senate has [confirmed](#) eight nominees since May 15, 2024.

| Nominee | Judicial/District Court | Confirmation Date |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Sanket Jayshukh Bulsara | Eastern District of New York | May 15, 2024 |
| Eric C. Schulte | District of South Dakota | May 15, 2024 |
| Camela C. Theeler | District of South Dakota | May 16, 2024 |
| Seth Robert Aframe | First Circuit Court of Appeals | May 20, 2024 |
| Krissa M. Lanham | District of Arizona | May 21, 2024 |
| Angela M. Martinez | District of Arizona | May 22, 2024 |
| Dena M. Coggins | Eastern District of California | May 22, 2024 |

Judicial Nominations: Since April 30, 2024, President Biden has [nominated](#) 4 candidates for judicial vacancies:

| Nominee | Judicial/District Court | Announcement Date |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Meredith A. Vacca | Western District of New York | May 14, 2024 |
| Joseph Francis Saporito Jr. | Middle District of Pennsylvania | May 14, 2024 |
| Adam B. Abelson | District of Maryland | May 14, 2024 |
| Catherine Henry | Eastern District of Pennsylvania | June 4, 2024 |