



Government Relations Update

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

September 2024

Advocacy Update

FBA continues to play a key role in advancing judgeships legislation. Contacts from FBA to key Representatives in the House helped enlist as many as a dozen original cosponsors for Chairman Issa's September 17 introduction of a companion to the JUDGES Act (S. 4199), which passed the Senate unanimously on August 1. Also at the request of FBA members, a number of Representatives are strongly urging House leadership to bring the judgeships bill to a vote before the October recess. Because it is identical to the Senate-approved version, if the House passes the companion bill, the legislation can go straight to the President's desk. Senator Young expressed appreciation to us for the work of FBA members in helping move his legislation. We will continue to work with staff for Chairman Issa and Ranking Member Johnson and Senators Young and Coons to move this across the finish line.

Legislative Update

Appropriations for the Judiciary

Fiscal Year 2025 begins on October 1, but Congress will not be able to enact appropriations legislation by that date. Congress is currently debating the terms of a Continuing Resolution, which will keep Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations levels in place for a yet-to-be-determined period of time (likely near the end of calendar 2024) while Congress resolves disagreements over spending levels across the federal government.

Because a Continuing Resolution typically doesn't provide for spending on new programs, it is unclear whether that legislation, when signed, will permit initial implementation of the Daniel Aderl Judicial Security Act program for state and local government grants.

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

There are no developments to report at this time regarding the Charter Amendments bill ([S. 2694](#)) but conversations continue with staff for the lead Senate sponsor, Sen. John Kennedy, about a possible pathway forward.

Judiciary Update

[Forty-four](#) of 890 active federal judicial positions, including the United States Court of Federal Claims and the United States territorial courts, are currently vacant. Twenty-two more judicial vacancies are [expected](#) through January of 2025, with 16 nominees named in advance.

Current Judicial Vacancies – As of Sept. 15, 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	43	15
US Court of Federal Claims	0	0
US Ct of International Trade	0	0
Total	44	16

There are [21 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](#) four nominees since July 31, 2024.

Nominee	Judicial District/Circuit	Confirmation Date
Jeannette A. Vargas	Southern District of New York	Sept. 10, 2024
Adam B. Abelson	District of Maryland	Sept. 10, 2024
Mary Kay Lanthier	District of Vermont	Sept. 11, 2024
Laura Margarete Provinzino	District of Minnesota	Sept. 12, 2024

Judicial Nominations: Since July 11, 2024, President Biden has [nominated](#) 1 candidate for judicial vacancies.

Nominee	Judicial District/Circuit	Nomination Date
Elizabeth C. Coombe	Northern District of New York	Sept. 9, 2024