



Federal Bar Association

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

The Latest on Public Policy and Advocacy Developments

APRIL 2025

ADVOCACY UPDATE

A record-setting Capitol Hill Day is in the books. More than 135 FBA members, including an increased number of judges and law student members, participated in over 200 meetings across the Hill. Meeting highlights included offers of assistance from several Members in securing passage of the JUDGES Act and in securing funds for Anderl Act implementation, as well as a report from Senator Whitehouse that he and Senator Kennedy were preparing to seek unanimous consent to approve the FBA Foundation Charter Amendments Act. On the eve of Congress' current recess, the Senators took steps to determine whether there is any opposition to the legislation, and so far none has been raised. Thus, we are optimistic that the bill will be approved shortly after Congress returns on April 28.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Appropriations for the Judiciary

As previously reported, the full-year Fiscal Year 2025 Continuing Resolution contains no explicit funding for Anderl Act implementation; however, during Capitol Hill Day, Senator Grassley offered to forward to the Attorney General the FBA's request that DOJ allocate funds for this purpose from the funds the CR conveyed generally. Consequently, FBA promptly prepared a letter making this request, which Senator Grassley sent to Attorney General Bondi with his own cover letter. Outside counsel is following up with the Attorney General's office.

In the next few weeks, we expect President Trump to present Congress with the Fiscal Year 2026 President's Budget Request (PB). Outside counsel will review and report the requests for the Judiciary as soon as the PB is made public. The President and Republican Congressional leadership have announced their intention to make further significant cuts to federal spending; consequently, FBA advocacy in support of the Judiciary's budget will be extremely important in the coming weeks and months.

Federal Judgeships Legislation

California Republican Congressman Darrell Issa's JUDGES Act ([H.R. 1702](#)), is gaining bipartisan support, with 8 Republican and 4 Democratic cosponsors as of April 15. The current version of the bill would add 66 federal district court seats across the country, as recommended by the Judicial Conference in 2023; however, Rep. Issa plans to amend the bill to reflect the Judicial Conference's 2025 recommendations, which were not available when the bill was introduced. The 2025 report adds 3 district court seats, for a total of 69 recommended new district court judgeships. It also makes some adjustments to the previously recommended locations for the new seats. The House Judiciary Committee reported H.R. 1702 favorably on March 5, and it is now awaiting Floor consideration.

We understand that Senator Young also is working to incorporate the Judicial Conference's updated recommendations into the 6-group, 10-year authorization structure and to recruit a Democratic co-lead for reintroduction of the JUDGES Act in the Senate in the coming weeks.

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. Thirteen more judicial vacancies are [expected](#) through February 1, 2026, with zero nominees named in advance.

Current Judicial Vacancies as of Apr. 15, 2025

[According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts](#)

	Vacancies	Nominees Pending
Supreme Court	0	0
Courts of Appeal	3	0
District Courts	43	0
US Court of Federal Claims	0	0
US Court of International Trade	0	0
Total	46	0

There are [twenty 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 current Congress has confirmed no nominees.

Judicial Nominations: President Trump has submitted no new nominations for judicial vacancies.