



Federal Bar Association

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

The Latest on Public Policy and Advocacy Developments

MAY 2025

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, after Capitol Hill Day, Senator Grassley forwarded to the Attorney General the FBA's request that DOJ allocate funds for this purpose from the funds the CR conveyed generally. Outside counsel have requested similar letters from other Senators who expressed support for Anderl Act funding during Capitol Hill Day meetings and are pursuing a meeting on this topic for FBA President McMurry with the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs.

The Judiciary has now released its FY 2026 budget request. For the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2025, the Judiciary is seeking \$9.4 billion in discretionary and \$852 million in mandatory appropriations. On behalf of the FBA, President McMurry has submitted letters to House and Senate Appropriations leaders urging full funding for the Article III and Article I courts, as well as \$10 million for the Anderl Act state and local grant program. Meanwhile, Representatives Mikie Sherrill (D-NJ) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) are leading a letter joined by over 30 of their colleagues, requesting that the House Commerce, Justice & Science Appropriations subcommittee (CJS) appropriate \$10 million to DOJ for implementing the Anderl Act state and local government grant program. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) and 10 of his colleagues (to date) are preparing a similar letter to the Senate CJS subcommittee, also urging the appropriation of \$10 million for the Anderl Act grant program. We appreciate the efforts of the many FBA members whose outreach to their elected representatives succeeded in adding signatories to these letters.

Federal Judgeships Legislation

California Republican Congressman Darrell Issa's JUDGES Act ([H.R. 1702](#)), is gaining bipartisan support, with 9 Republican and 4 Democratic cosponsors as of May 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.

There has been no committee activity on the competing judgeships bill ([H.R. 1929](#)) introduced on March 6 by Democrat Reps. Hank Johnson, Jerry Nadler, and Jamie Raskin, though it has gained one more Democrat sponsor in Rep. Norma Torres (D-CA-35).

We understand that, due to differing views between Republicans and Democrats on the appropriate timing of authorizing the new judgeships, efforts to craft a bipartisan Senate judgeships bill are on hold pending further House action.

Foundation of the Federal Bar Association Charter Amendments Act

On April 30, the Senate approved the FBA Foundation Charter Amendments Act ([S. 616](#)) by unanimous consent. Outside counsel and FBA members are urging House leadership to bring the Senate-approved bill to the Floor for consideration at the earliest opportunity.

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. Fifteen more judicial vacancies are [expected](#) through February 1, 2026, with one nominee named in advance.

Current Judicial Vacancies as of May 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	4
US Court of Federal Claims	0	0
US Court of International Trade	0	0
Total	46	4

There are [twenty-two 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: Since April 15, President Trump has submitted four nominations for judicial vacancies:

Nominee	Jurisdiction	Nomination Date
Cristian M. Stevens	Eastern District of Missouri	May 12, 2025
Maria A. Lanahan	Eastern District of Missouri	May 12, 2025
Joshua M. Divine	Eastern District of Missouri	May 12, 2025
Zachary M. Bluestone	Eastern District of Missouri	May 12, 2025