



Federal Bar Association

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

The Latest on Public Policy and Advocacy Developments

JUNE 2025

ADVOCACY UPDATE

Following his May 14 submission of letters to House and Senate Appropriations leaders urging full funding for the Article III and Article I courts and \$10 million for the Anderl Act grant program, FBA President Glen McMurry visited DC on May 21 to continue FBA's appropriations advocacy. President McMurry had very productive meetings with both Ohio Senators, as well as key House and Senate Appropriations Committee staff.

Additionally, as a result of outreach from many other FBA members, Representatives Mikie Sherrill (D-NJ) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) were joined by a bipartisan group of over 30 of their colleagues in a letter requesting that the House Commerce, Justice & Science Appropriations subcommittee (CJS) appropriate \$10 million to DOJ for implementing the Anderl Act grant program. FBA member outreach also helped secure 19 Democrat signatories on a similar letter led by Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) to the Senate CJS subcommittee. We appreciate the efforts of the many FBA members whose contacts with their elected representatives succeeded in adding signatories to these letters.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Appropriations for the Judiciary

The Judiciary has released its FY 2026 budget request, seeking \$9.4 billion in discretionary and \$852 million in mandatory appropriations for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2025.

The White House released a "skinny budget" on May 2, outlining the Administration's plans to increase defense and border security spending and to cut spending in a number of other areas, but the judiciary was not mentioned in that document. On May 30, the White House released a Technical Supplement to the May 2 document, which sets forth the Trump Administration's detailed budget proposal, including the \$9.4 billion requested by the federal judiciary. We also are pleased to report that, as indicated in recent conversations between outside counsel and the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, the Trump Administration has requested \$5 million in DOJ funding to implement the Anderl Act grant program.

Federal Judgeships Legislation

California Republican Congressman Darrell Issa's JUDGES Act ([H.R. 1702](#)), currently has 10 Republican and 4 Democratic cosponsors. Although the House Judiciary Committee reported H.R. 1702 favorably on March 5, the bill has not yet been scheduled for Floor consideration. Outside counsel and FBA members are in contact with House leadership about bringing this legislation before the full House as soon as possible. As we have previously explained, 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.

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. Rep. Norma Torres (D-CA-35) was added as a cosponsor in March, but no other cosponsors have been added since then.

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

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 working with House leadership to bring the Senate-approved bill to the Floor for consideration at the earliest opportunity.

JUDICIARY UPDATE

[Forty-nine](#) of 890 active federal judicial positions, including the United States Court of Federal Claims and the United States territorial courts, are currently vacant. Twelve more judicial vacancies are [expected](#) through February 1, 2026, with one nominee named in advance.

Current Judicial Vacancies as of June 13, 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	46	4
US Court of Federal Claims	0	0
US Court of International Trade	0	0
Total	49	4

There are [twenty-four 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