



Federal Bar Association

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

The Latest on Public Policy and Advocacy Developments

AUGUST 2025

ADVOCACY UPDATE

Although Congress is in recess, FBA members, including President Glen McMurry and Foundation Director David Guerry, have continued working diligently to encourage House leadership to bring the Senate-passed Foundation of the Federal Bar Association Charter Amendments Act ([S. 616](#)) promptly to a vote when Congress returns in September.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Appropriations for the Judiciary

The Trump Administration's budget proposal includes \$9.4 billion in discretionary funding (as requested by the federal Judiciary), as well as \$5 million to implement the Daniel Anderl Act state and local government database manager grant program to be administered by the Department of Justice.

On July 15, the House Commerce, Justice and Science (CJS) Subcommittee approved its FY 2026 spending bill, which includes \$5 million for the Anderl Act grant program. The full Appropriations Committee markup of this legislation is not yet scheduled.

On July 17, the full Senate Appropriations Committee approved its FY 2026 CJS spending bill. The Senate version includes \$10 million for the Anderl Act grant program, comparable to the funding level in last year's FY2025 appropriations bills.

On July 21, the House Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) Subcommittee approved its FY 2026 spending bill, which includes the budget for the federal Judiciary. The House bill would provide \$8,936,341,000 in discretionary funding for the Judiciary, including \$892 million for court security. The legislation also would provide \$148 million for the Supreme Court, including \$18 million for the personal protection of the Supreme Court Justices, and \$74 million to strengthen the Judiciary's cybersecurity and information technology initiatives. The bill cuts funding for fees to jurors and commissioners by more than 65% and cuts funding for care of grounds by 45%. The full House Appropriations Committee markup of this bill is not yet scheduled.

As of this writing, the Senate has yet to consider FY 2026 FSGG legislation.

We believe it is unlikely that both chambers have time to pass and reconcile differences between their appropriations bills before the 2025 Fiscal Year ends on September 30. Instead, we expect FY 2025 spending levels to carry forward for at least a short period of time via a Continuing Resolution.

Federal Judgeships Legislation

California Republican Congressman Darrell Issa's JUDGES Act ([H.R. 1702](#)), is holding steady at 10 Republican and 5 Democratic cosponsors. As a reminder, the House Judiciary Committee reported H.R. 1702 favorably on March 5, but the bill has not been scheduled for a vote by the full chamber. Outside counsel and FBA members continue to urge House leadership to bring the bill to the Floor.

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, and no new cosponsors have been added since Rep. Norma Torres (D-CA-35) joined the bill in March.

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.

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. Nine more judicial vacancies are [expected](#) through June 8, 2026, with three nominees named in advance.

Current Judicial Vacancies as of August 14, 2025 [According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts](#)

	Vacancies	Nominees Pending
Supreme Court	0	0
Courts of Appeal	2	1
District Courts	46	6
US Court of Federal Claims	0	0
US Court of International Trade	1	0
Total	49	7

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](#) four nominees since July 15:

Nominee	Jurisdiction	Nomination Date
Joshua M. Divine	Eastern District of Missouri	July 22, 2025
Cristian M. Stevens	Eastern District of Missouri	July 22, 2025
Zachary M. Bluestone	Eastern District of Missouri	July 23, 2025
Emil J. Bove, III	Third Circuit Court of Appeals	July 29, 2025

Judicial Nominations: Since July 15, President Trump has submitted one nomination for a judicial vacancy:

Nominee	Jurisdiction	Nomination Date
Joshua D. Dunlap	First Circuit Court of Appeals	July 15, 2025