



Federal Bar Association

# GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

The Latest on Public Policy and Advocacy Developments

SEPTEMBER 2025

## ADVOCACY UPDATE

Outside counsel, FBA President Glen McMurry, and Foundation Board Members David Guerry and Ashley Belleau continue to urge House leadership to bring the Senate-passed Foundation of the Federal Bar Association Charter Amendments Act ([S. 616](#)) to the House Floor for a vote. We are unaware of any opposition to the substance of the legislation, but there is significant competition for Floor consideration, especially as we approach the end of the fiscal and calendar years.

## 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 approved the bill, including the \$5 million in grant funding, on September 10.

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 FY 2025 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 \$74 million to strengthen the Judiciary's cybersecurity and information technology initiatives and \$148 million in funding the Supreme Court, including \$18 million for the personal protection of the Supreme Court Justices. The bill cuts funding for fees to jurors and commissioners by more than 65% and cuts funding for care of grounds by 45%. Under this legislation, defender services would receive \$1.5 billion, which is \$120 million more than was appropriated for FY 2025 but \$196 million less than requested. The full House Appropriations Committee approved the legislation on September 3.

As of this writing, the Senate has yet to consider FY 2026 FSGG legislation. Appropriators and Congressional leadership have shifted focus to drafting a Continuing Resolution to keep the government funded after September 30 and there will be no reconciliation of differences on the CJS versions before the new fiscal year starts. 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-eight](#) of 890 active federal judicial positions, including the United States Court of Federal Claims and the United States territorial courts, are currently vacant. Eleven more judicial vacancies are [expected](#) through June 8, 2026, with two nominees named in advance.

#### **Current Judicial Vacancies as of September 15, 2025** [According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts](#)

	<b>Vacancies</b>	<b>Nominees Pending</b>
Supreme Court	0	0
Courts of Appeal	2	2
District Courts	45	9
US Court of Federal Claims	0	0
US Court of International Trade	1	0
Total	48	11

There are [19 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](#) three nominees since August 15:

<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Nomination Date</b>
Edward L. Artau	Southern District of Florida	September 8, 2025
Maria A. Lanahan	Eastern District of Missouri	September 9, 2025
Kyle Christopher Dudek	Middle District of Florida	September 9, 2025

**Judicial Nominations:** Since August 15, President Trump has submitted six nomination for judicial vacancies:

<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Nomination Date</b>
Jennifer Lee Mascott	Third Circuit Court of Appeals	September 2, 2025
Robert P. Chamberlin	Northern District of Mississippi	September 2, 2025
Bill Lewis	Middle District of Alabama	September 2, 2025
Edmund G. LaCour	Northern District of Alabama	September 2, 2025
Harold D. Mooty	Northern District of Alabama	September 2, 2025
James D. Maxwell, II	Northern District of Mississippi	September 2, 2025