



Federal Bar Association

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

The Latest on Public Policy and Advocacy Developments

NOVEMBER 2025

ADVOCACY UPDATE

Now that the shutdown has ended, on behalf of the FBA, CEO Stacy King has [written Congressional appropriations leadership](#) urging Congress to prioritize finalizing FY 2026 appropriations for the federal judiciary, including funding for defender services and judicial security. Specifically, the letter urges Congress to fully fund the President's Budget request for the judiciary in the Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) bill and to provide \$10 million for the Anderl Act grant program in the Commerce, Justice, & Science (CJS) bill (as provided in the Senate bill, rather than the \$5 million provided in the House bill).

We also are continuing efforts to persuade 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.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Appropriations for the Judiciary

On November 12, Congress passed and President Trump signed a Continuing Resolution (CR) extending the FY 2025 spending levels until January 30, 2026, to give Congress more time to finalize FY 2026 appropriations legislation. (As you will recall, there was a full-year CR in FY 2025, meaning that the government has actually been limited to FY 2024 funding levels). The CR included three of the 12 annual appropriations bills, but not the two most of most interest to the FBA: the above-referenced FSGG and CJS bills. To avoid further adverse impacts to court operations resulting from a possible repeat shutdown in January, in addition to the letter from Stacy King, FBA will engage in additional advocacy aimed at ensuring the FSGG and CJS bills are enacted by the January 30 deadline.

As a reminder, the Trump Administration's FY 2026 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.

The full House Appropriations Committee approved its Commerce, Justice and Science (CJS) bill, including \$5 million in for the Anderl Act grant program, on September 10. On July 17, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved its FY 2026 CJS spending bill. The Senate version includes \$10 million for the Anderl Act grant program (the same amount provided in the proposed but not enacted FY 2025 appropriations bills).

On September 3, the House Appropriations Committee approved its FY 2026 Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) bill, which includes \$8,936,341,000 in discretionary funding for the Judiciary. The legislation would provide \$892 million for court security, \$74 million for cybersecurity and information technology initiatives, and \$148 million for the Supreme Court, including \$18 million for the personal protection of the Justices. The bill cuts funding for fees to jurors and commissioners by

more than 65%. Defender Services would receive \$1.5 billion, which is \$120 million more than was appropriated for FY 2025 but \$196 million less than requested. As of this writing, the Senate has yet to consider FY 2026 FSGG legislation.

Federal Judgeships Legislation

Congressman Issa’s JUDGES Act ([H.R. 1702](#)), has added no cosponsors since our last report. The bill, which was approved by the House Judiciary Committee on March 5, still has not been scheduled for a vote by the full chamber.

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 on March 25. No judgeships legislation has been introduced in the Senate.

JUDICIARY UPDATE

[Forty-seven](#) of 890 active federal judicial positions, including the United States Court of Federal Claims and the United States territorial courts, are currently vacant. Six more judicial vacancies are [expected](#) through July 1, 2026, with zero nominees named in advance.

Current Judicial Vacancies as of November 17, 2025
[According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts](#)

	Vacancies	Nominees Pending
Supreme Court	0	0
Courts of Appeal	0	0
District Courts	46	9
US Court of Federal Claims	0	0
US Court of International Trade	1	0
Total	47	9

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](#) ten nominees since October 15:

Nominee	Jurisdiction	Nomination Date
Harold D. Mooty, III	Northern District of Alabama	October 21, 2025
Anne-Leigh Gaylord Moe	Middle District of Florida	October 21, 2025

(continued)

William W. Mercer	District of Montana	October 22, 2025
Stephen Chad Meredith	Eastern District of Kentucky	October 23, 2025
Rebecca L. Taibleson	Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals	October 27, 2025
Bill Lewis	Middle District of Alabama	October 27, 2025
Jordan Emery Pratt	Middle District of Florida	October 28, 2025
Edmund G. LaCour	Northern District of Alabama	October 29, 2025
Joshua D. Dunlap	First Circuit Court of Appeals	November 4, 2025
Eric Chunyee Tung	Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals	November 5, 2025

Judicial Nominations: Since October 15, President Trump has [submitted](#) two nominations for judicial vacancies:

Nominee	Jurisdiction	Nomination Date
William J. Crain	Eastern District of Louisiana	October 21, 2025
Alexander C. Van Hook	Western District of Louisiana	October 21, 2025