



Federal Bar Association

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

The Latest on Public Policy and Advocacy Developments

MARCH 2026

ADVOCACY UPDATE

House Appropriations Committee Chair Tom Cole released the chamber's FY 2027 appropriations guidance and deadlines on February 25, announcing a March 13 deadline for House Members to submit programmatic funding requests for the Commerce, Justice, and Science Bill (CJS), which includes funding for the Anderl Act grant program. Consequently, although the President's Budget request has not been released, after consulting with the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the FBA decided to ask Congress to provide \$10 million for the Anderl Act grant program in FY2027, and FBA members across the country have been submitting programmatic funding requests to their Senators and Representatives, asking them to include \$10 million in Anderl Act funding in their appropriations priorities.

Additionally, Reps. Goldman and Fitzpatrick submitted a bipartisan letter from 43 House Members to Chair Rogers and Ranking Member Meng of the House Appropriations CJS Subcommittee, urging the inclusion of \$10 million in Anderl Act grant funding in the FY 2027 bill.

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee deadlines were released March 18, with CJS requests due April 14 and FSGG programmatic requests due April 15. Also, Senator Booker's staff are working to enlist a Republican co-lead and bipartisan co-signers on a joint Member letter supporting Anderl Act grant funding, similar to the one submitted by Reps. Goldman and Fitzpatrick.

In addition to our advocacy on Capitol Hill, FBA has met with the Department of Justice to discuss plans and offer support for the development and implementation of the Anderl Act grant program.

We are looking forward to seeing FBA members on Capitol Hill Day, which is scheduled for March 26, 2026. A virtual preparatory briefing will take place at 3 pm on March 23, 2026. Capitol Hill Day will begin at 7:30 am in the Capitol Visitor's Center with remarks from New York Rep. Dan Goldman and a Continental breakfast.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Federal Judiciary Funding

As mentioned above, the FY 2027 appropriations process is underway, but the judiciary's funding request, which will be included in the President's Budget Request to Congress, is not yet available. Therefore, during Capitol Hill Day, FBA will thank Congress for the FY 2026 appropriations (\$9.2 billion provided; \$9.4 billion requested) but explain that because shortfalls present significant challenges to the courts' fulfillment of their constitutional role, Congress should fully fund the judiciary's budget for FY 2027.

Federal Judgeships Legislation

As a reminder, Rep. Issa's judgeships bill ([H.R. 1702](#)) was approved by the House Judiciary Committee on March 5, 2025, but the bill has seen no further action, and there has been no action on the other

pending House judgeships bill, led by Rep. Hank Johnson ([H.R. 1929](#)). The terms of Senate legislation to add judgeships are still under negotiation. Thus, the urgent need for additional judgeships in certain districts, as recommended by the Judicial Conference, also is one of the policy priorities FBA members will address during Capitol Hill Day meetings.

JUDICIARY UPDATE

[Thirty-seven](#) of 890 active federal judicial positions, including the United States Court of Federal Claims, the U.S. Court of International Trade, and the United States territorial courts, are currently vacant. Ten more judicial vacancies are [expected](#) through January 2, 2027, with three nominees named in advance.

Current Judicial Vacancies as of March 18, 2026 [According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts](#)

	Vacancies	Nominees Pending
Supreme Court	0	0
Courts of Appeal	0	0
District Courts	36	8
US Court of Federal Claims	0	0
US Court of International Trade	1	1
Total	37	9

There are [15 judicial vacancy emergencies](#), based on caseload and/or the length of the vacancy, according to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. Nine emergency districts are in Texas.

Judicial Confirmations: The current Congress has [confirmed](#) zero nominees since February 15, 2026.

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

Nominee	Jurisdiction	Nomination Date
Kara Marie Westercamp	Court of International Trade	March 2, 2026
Anthony J. Powell	District of Kansas	March 2, 2026
Anthony W. Mattivi	District of Kansas	March 2, 2026
Jeffrey M. Kuhlman	District of Kansas	March 2, 2026
Evan Rikhye	District of Virgin Islands	March 2, 2026
Sheria Akins Clarke	District of South Carolina	March 2, 2026