



Federal Bar Association

# GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

The Latest on Public Policy and Advocacy Developments

APRIL 2026

## ADVOCACY UPDATE

Another record Capitol Hill Day is in the books. On March 26, 2026, after inspiring remarks from New York Rep. Dan Goldman at a kickoff breakfast in the Capitol, 130 FBA members from 28 states fanned out across the Hill for 223 meetings with members of Congress and congressional staff. We are still reviewing the post-meeting reports, but the initial feedback has been very positive.

FBA members urged Congress to fully fund the judiciary's FY 2027 budget request of \$9.7 billion and to provide \$10 million in FY 2027 for the Daniel Anderl Act grant program. FBA members also urged Congress to support legislation to relieve certain overburdened district courts by adding seats to the federal bench as recommended by the Judicial Conference. FBA members' personal experiences and concrete examples of the impacts of funding shortfalls and the threats to federal judges and their families clearly resonated with members and staff. And in meetings with members of certain key committees, FBA members also expressed the association's general support for the judiciary's proposal to gradually assume responsibility for management of federal courthouses.

After Capitol Hill Day, Sen. Booker prepared a letter urging Senate Appropriations leadership to provide \$10 million in FY 2027 for the second year of Anderl Act grant program implementation. Thanks to outreach from many FBA members, 22 other senators co-signed the letter.

In the coming weeks, the FBA will follow-up with the Department of Justice on the development of the Anderl Act grant program and the anticipated timeframe for the release of the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

### *Federal Judiciary Funding*

As mentioned above, the judiciary has requested \$9.7 billion in funding for FY 2027. The President's Budget Request released on April 3, 2026, includes \$5 million for the Department of Justice Daniel Anderl Act grant program, but the FBA is urging Congress to provide \$10 million. That amount is based on two facts from previous appropriations cycles: (1) both the House and Senate approved \$10 million for the Anderl Act grant program for FY 2024 (though Congress ultimately enacted a Continuing Resolution that year) and (2) Congress provided \$7.5 million in first-year funding in FY 2026.

### *Federal Judgeships Legislation*

In Capitol Hill Day meetings, we learned that bipartisan efforts to craft a judgeships bill are ongoing in the Senate and that House leadership is waiting to see what the Senate negotiations produce before proceeding to floor consideration of Rep. Issa's judgeships bill ([H.R. 1702](#)), which has already received approval from the House Judiciary Committee.

## FY27 APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

House Republican appropriators released their Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) funding bill for Fiscal Year 2027 on April 16, 2026. The bill includes a total of \$9.6 billion in discretionary funding for operations of the judiciary, an increase of \$381 million above fiscal year 2026 but \$36 million below the request.

Of the total provided, the bill includes:

- Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services – \$6.4 billion, an increase of \$312 million above fiscal year 2026 and the same as the request.
- Defender Services – \$1.8 billion, an increase of \$27 million above fiscal year 2026 and the same as the request, to support the right to the assistance of counsel.
- Court Security – \$921 million, \$29 million above fiscal year 2026 and the same as the request.

## **JUDICIARY UPDATE**

[Thirty-six](#) 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. Eleven more judicial vacancies are [expected](#) through January 2, 2027, with three nominees named in advance.

### **Current Judicial Vacancies as of April 14, 2026** [According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts](#)

	<b>Vacancies</b>	<b>Nominees Pending</b>
Supreme Court	0	0
Courts of Appeal	0	0
District Courts	35	7
US Court of Federal Claims	0	0
US Court of International Trade	1	1
Total	36	8

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 Senate has [confirmed](#) one nominee since March 15, 2026.

<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Confirmation Date</b>
Anna St. John	Eastern District of Louisiana	March 17, 2026

**Judicial Nominations:** Since March 15, President Trump has [submitted](#) zero nominations for judicial vacancies.