

# Justice at Stake



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July 31, 2013

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Republican Leader McConnell:

On behalf of Justice at Stake (JAS), a nonpartisan, national partnership<sup>1</sup> of more than fifty organizations dedicated to keeping our courts fair and impartial, I write in support of the Federal Judgeship Act of 2013 (S. 1385). This legislation, which was introduced yesterday by Senators Chris Coons and Patrick Leahy, would create 91 new federal judgeships in two federal circuits and 32 judicial districts across 21 states.

This legislation represents an important step toward addressing the growing disparity between the number of judges on the bench and the caseload that faces them. For more than 2 decades, there has been little congressional action to address judicial staffing deficits despite steadily increasing workload. Importantly, this legislation implements the recommendations of the nonpartisan Administrative Office of the United States Courts (AO) and the Judicial Conference of the United States, which is chaired by Chief Justice John Roberts. Created in 1939 to provide support and counsel to the Judicial Conference, the AO has long served as the source of thoughtful, non-partisan analysis and recommendations on resource allocation within the federal courts, including the number of authorized judgeships for each federal circuit. The AO's recommendations are based on close analysis of data, including not only the number of cases heard by a court, but also the complexity of such cases.

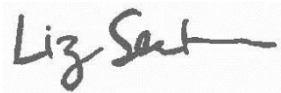
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<sup>1</sup> As with any diverse partnership, the views stated in this Justice at Stake letter do not necessarily reflect the positions of every JAS partner organization or board member.

JAS asks leaders from both sides of the aisle to work together to pass this commonsense legislation. Failing to provide adequate resources for our nation's courts—whether these resources be additional judgeships or desperately needed funds—imperils our ability to live up to our Constitution's promises. Inadequately providing for the courts harms the American people, who depend upon judges for the adjudication and protection of their rights, and American businesses that rely on the courts for the structural certainty necessary for economic growth.

JAS expresses its gratitude to you for your tireless efforts on behalf of the American public. If the members of your staff have any questions or want any additional information on this matter, please contact Praveen Fernandes, Director of Federal Affairs & Diversity Initiatives, at [pfernandes@justiceatstake.org](mailto:pfernandes@justiceatstake.org). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Liz Seaton" followed by a horizontal flourish.

Liz Seaton  
Acting Executive Director