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Judiciary Budget Request, FY2024

Overview

The FY2024 judiciary budget request seeks \$8.95 billion in discretionary appropriations (an increase of 5.8% over the FY2023 enacted level). The request also includes \$796.1 million in mandatory appropriations for use, in part, to pay the salaries and benefits of certain types of judges and provide funds for judicial retirement accounts.

The judiciary also uses non-appropriated funds to offset its appropriations requirement. The majority of these non-appropriated funds are derived from the collection of fees, primarily court filing fees. The judiciary’s annual appropriations request reflects the net needs of the judiciary after the use of non-appropriated funds.

Appropriations for the judiciary are typically included in the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations (FSGG) bill.

Table 1 presents the FY2023 discretionary enacted level and the FY2024 discretionary request for each account. The amounts reported for the federal judiciary’s FY2024 request reflect reestimated amounts of funding needs submitted by the judiciary on November 8, 2023, and not the amounts submitted in its original request on March 9, 2023.

Individual Accounts

Supreme Court

The total FY2024 discretionary request for the Supreme Court, \$161.3 million, is contained in two accounts: (1) Salaries and Expenses (\$140.6 million) and (2) Care of the Building and Grounds (\$20.7 million). The total represents a 16.2% increase over the FY2023 enacted level.

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit

This court, consisting of 12 judges, exercises jurisdiction over certain lower court rulings on patents and trademarks, international trade, and federal claims cases. The FY2024 discretionary budget request is \$39.7 million, an increase of 8.0% over the FY2023 enacted level.

U.S. Court of International Trade

This court has exclusive nationwide jurisdiction over civil actions against the United States, its agencies, and its officers, and certain civil actions brought by the United States arising out of import transactions and the administration and enforcement of federal customs and international trade laws. The FY2024 discretionary request

of \$22.4 million is an increase of 5.4% over the FY2023 enacted level.

Table 1. FY2023 Discretionary Appropriations and FY2024 Discretionary Appropriations Request
(in millions of dollars)

Account	FY2023 Enacted	FY2024 Request
Supreme Court (total)	\$138.80	\$161.26
<i>Salaries and Expenses</i>	\$109.55	\$140.57
<i>Buildings and Grounds</i>	\$29.25	\$20.69
Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit	\$36.74	\$39.68
Court of International Trade	\$21.26	\$22.40
Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services (total)	\$8,106.12	\$8,567.74
<i>Salaries and Expenses</i>	\$5,905.06	\$6,217.26
<i>Defender Services</i>	\$1,382.68	\$1,505.78
<i>Court Security</i>	\$750.16	\$783.23
<i>Fees of Jurors and Commissioners</i>	\$58.24	\$50.60
<i>Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund</i>	\$9.98	\$10.87
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts	\$102.67	\$105.53
Federal Judicial Center	\$34.26	\$35.08
Sentencing Commission	\$21.64	\$23.15
TOTAL	\$8,461.49	\$8,954.85

Sources: H.R. 2617, FY2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 117-328); Enclosure I of Judicial Conference letter to Reps. Kay Granger, Steve Womack, Rosa DeLauro, and Steny H. Hoyer, November 8, 2023.

Note: Table reports only those amounts included in regular FY2023 appropriations. Columns may not sum due to rounding.

Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services

The total FY2024 discretionary funding request of \$8.57 billion covers 12 of the regional courts of appeals and 94 district courts located in the 50 states, District of Columbia, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Commonwealth of the

Northern Mariana Islands, and the territories of Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The account is divided among salaries and expenses, defender services, court security, the fees of jurors and commissioners, and the Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund.

Salaries and Expenses

The FY2024 discretionary request for this account is \$6.22 billion, an increase of 5.3% over the FY2023 enacted level.

Defender Services

This account funds the operations of the federal public defender and community defender organizations, and compensation, reimbursements, and expenses of private practice panel attorneys appointed by federal courts to serve as defense counsel to indigent individuals. The cost for this account is determined by the number and type of prosecutions brought by U.S. attorneys. The FY2024 request is \$1.51 billion, an increase of 8.9% over the FY2023 enacted level.

Court Security

This account provides for protective services, security systems, and equipment needs in courthouses and other federal facilities to ensure the safety of judicial officers, employees, and visitors. Under this account, the majority of funding for court security is transferred to the U.S. Marshals Service to pay for court security officers under the Judicial Facility Security Program. The FY2024 request is \$783.2 million, an increase of 4.4% over the FY2023 enacted level.

Fees of Jurors and Commissioners

This account funds the fees and allowances provided to grand and petit jurors, and compensation for jury and land commissioners. The FY2024 request is \$50.6 million, a decrease of 13.1% over the FY2023 enacted level.

Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund

The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program funds a federal no-fault program that protects the availability of vaccines in the nation by diverting a substantial number of claims from the tort arena. The FY2024 request is \$10.9 million, an 8.9% increase over the FY2023 enacted level.

Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts (AO)

As the central support entity for the judiciary, the AO provides a wide range of administrative, management, program, and information technology services to the U.S. courts. The AO also provides support to the Judicial Conference of the United States, and implements conference policies and applicable federal statutes and regulations. The FY2024 request for AO is \$105.5 million, an increase of 2.8% over the FY2023 enacted level.

Federal Judicial Center

As the judiciary’s research and education entity, the Federal Judicial Center undertakes research and evaluation of judicial operations for the Judicial Conference committees

and the courts. In addition, the center provides judges, court staff, and others with orientation, continuing education, and training. The center’s FY2024 request is \$35.1 million, an increase of 2.4% over the FY2023 enacted level.

United States Sentencing Commission

The commission promulgates sentencing policies, practices, and guidelines for the federal criminal justice system. The FY2024 request is \$23.2 million, an increase of 7.0% over the FY2023 enacted level.

Mandatory Funding

Mandatory funding in the judiciary budget includes constitutionally required funding for the salaries and benefits of Article III judges, as well as statutory direct spending for the salaries and benefits of certain Article I judges. Mandatory appropriations also provide funding for judicial retirement accounts. **Table 2** presents the FY2023 enactment for each account and the FY2024 request.

Table 2. FY2023 Mandatory Appropriations and FY2024 Mandatory Budget Request
(in millions of dollars)

Account	FY2023 Enacted	FY2024 Request
Supreme Court	\$2.90	\$3.07
Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit	\$3.36	\$3.53
Court of International Trade	\$2.16	\$2.38
Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services	\$501.15	\$535.26
Judicial Retirement Funds	\$251.80	\$251.90
TOTAL	\$761.37	\$796.14

Source: Fiscal Year 2024 Congressional Budget Summary (prepared by the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts, March 2023). FY2023 mandatory levels represent FY2023 assumed financial plan levels.
Note: Columns may not sum due to rounding.

FY2024 Funding Priorities

According to the federal judiciary, its FY2024 budget request reflects the need to maintain current services and modernize or replace existing and outdated judicial facilities and infrastructure. Several of its funding priorities for FY2024 include supporting the anticipated high number of nominees confirmed to Article III judgeships, as well as providing resources to address expected increases in judicial workload and caseloads. The judiciary also seeks to continue prioritizing its national IT initiatives, including critical improvements in cybersecurity and IT modernization.

Barry J. McMillion, Analyst in American National Government

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