

December 6, 2024

Hon. Pete Aguilar
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and boris.medzhibovsky@mail.house.gov

Hon. Ken Calvert
via email to:
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Hon. Judy Chu
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Hon. Young Kim
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Hon. Jay Obernolte
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Hon. Raul Ruiz
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Hon. Mark Takano
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Hon. Norma Torres
via email to: don.andres@mail.house.gov

Re: Inland Action Support for passage of the JUDGES Act (H.R.9625 / S.4199)

To the Honorable Representatives of the Inland Empire:

We write to urge your support for the JUDGES Act (H.R.9625/S.4199), which we understand may soon be coming to the House floor for a vote. The bill will add nine critically needed new judgeships in the Central District of California, serving the Inland Empire as well as five other Southern California counties. It will also address the need for additional judgeships in the other districts in California, as well as in several other states, all in accordance with the judicial needs survey and analysis by the Judicial Conference of the United States. The Judicial Conference's determination of the need for these judgeships – both in number and location – is driven by caseload and existing shortfalls in judicial resources, not by politics.

The proposed legislation reflects that in that it enjoys broad, bipartisan, support, including co-sponsorship in the House by Representatives Calvert, Obernolte, and Kim within our Inland Empire delegation as well as several California House Democrats. Both of our Senators co-sponsored the companion bill in their chamber, and the bill passed there by unanimous consent earlier this year. The bill is also structured to minimize potential partisan advantage, in that the new judgeships are spread out and phased in over several years – from 2025 through 2035 – so that no single President will be able to appoint all of the new judges, and multiple Senates will have the opportunity to advise and consent on those appointments.

As you know from our annual visits with you each year in Washington, securing badly needed additional federal judicial resources for the Inland Empire has been one of Inland Action's primary issues for the last several years. The JUDGES Act is an important piece of that, and will mark the first time since 1990 that any new, permanent, judgeships have been created in the Central District.

The JUDGES Act marks the best chance in more than a generation to address the chronic understaffing of our local District Court. As noted above, the companion Senate bill has already passed, and by unanimous consent no less. We understand from media reports, citing staff from Rep. Issa's office (the lead author of the House bill), that the bill will be brought to the floor next week.

The Inland Empire needs the additional judgeships this bill will create to do the day-to-day work of the District Court and provide better access to justice for our community. We strongly urge your "yes" vote on this legislation.

We thank you for your time and efforts to support the people of our region with the critical judicial resources we need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Michaels". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie Michaels
Executive Director, Inland Action

Cc: Sen. Alex Padilla
Sen. Laphonza Butler
Hon. Dolly M. Gee, Chief Judge, Central District of California