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December 9, 2025

Honorable John Thune
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate SD-511
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Mike Johnson
House Speaker
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
House Minority Leader
2267 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Thune, Johnson, Schumer and Jeffries:

We, the undersigned attorneys general, write in support of the Judiciary's recent request for additional funding for its Court Security program. Federal judges across the country are voicing concern for their safety. While the undersigned hold differing views on many legal issues, we all agree that the legal system cannot function if judges are unsafe in their homes and courthouses. We ask that Congress address the Judiciary's concerns and provide the resources that are necessary to protect the safety of federal courts and federal judges.

By all accounts, the current need for judicial security is greater than ever. In his year-end report for 2024, Chief Justice Roberts opined on the "significant uptick in identified threats at all levels of the judiciary."¹ The Chief Justice cited to data from the United States Marshals Service (USMS) FY 2024 report showing that the "volume of hostile threats and communications directed at judges has more than tripled over the past decade."² And as Seventh Circuit Judge and Chair

¹ Chief Justice of the United States, John G. Roberts, "2024 Year End Report on the Federal Judiciary," at 5, available at <http://www.supremecourt.gov/publicinfo/year-end/2024year-endreport.pdf> (last visited Nov. 22, 2025).

² *Ibid.*; see "FY 2024 Annual Report," U.S. Department of Justice, United States Marshals Service at 47, available at <http://www.usmarshals.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/Pub-2-2024-Annual-Report.pdf> (last visited Nov. 22, 2025) ("[T]he number and intensity of concerning and potential threatening electronic communications related to protected persons and locations have increased.").

of the Judicial Conference Committee on the Budget Amy J. St. Eve testified before a House Appropriations subcommittee last month, the Judiciary faces a “very active threat environment.”³ At that same hearing, the Honorable Robert J. Conrad, Jr., Director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts and former Chief Judge of the Western District of North Carolina, expressed “deep concern with the increasing threats being made against federal judges and courthouses.”⁴

These concerns are growing, and they have been known to federal judges for years. When the Honorable Patrick J. Schiltz began his tenure as Chief Judge of the District of Minnesota in July of 2022, he identified security as one of the top issues facing the court, citing a “more poisonous, angry atmosphere” facing the judiciary, punctuated by the risk of “mobs” assembling outside of judges’ homes seeking to intimidate judges.⁵

Some incidents have garnered significant public attention, such as fatal incidents and those involving sitting Supreme Court Justices. In 2020, Daniel Anderl was murdered at home during an attempted assassination of his mother, District Judge Esther Salas. In March of this year, police in South Carolina received an email from someone claiming to have placed a bomb in the mailbox at the home of Justice Amy Coney Barrett’s sister.⁶ And in April, a man pled guilty to the 2022 attempted assassination of Justice Brett Kavanaugh. Like others who have threatened and attacked judges and their families, the individuals who attempted to assassinate Judge Salas and Justice Kavanaugh are believed to have obtained their home addresses on the Internet.⁷

³ *United States House of Representatives Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government Committee on Appropriations*, 119th Congress (2025) (statement of the Honorable Amy J. St. Eve, Chair Committee on the Budget of the Judicial Conference of the United States) at 3, available at <http://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/document/written-statement-judge-amy-j.-st.-eve-in-the-u.s.-house-of-representatives-may-2025.pdf> (last visited Nov. 22, 2025) (“Statement of Honorable Amy J. St. Eve”).

⁴ *United States House of Representatives Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government Committee on Appropriations*, 119th Congress (2025) (statement of the Honorable Robert J. Conrad Jr., Director, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts) at 1-2, available at <http://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/document/written-statement-of-judge-robert-conrad-jr-in-the-u.s.-house-of-representatives-may-2025.pdf> (last visited Nov. 22, 2025) (“Statement of Honorable Robert J. Conrad Jr.”).

⁵ Stephen Montemayor, “New chief federal Judge Patrick Schiltz sees caseloads, security as Minnesota court’s top issues,” *Star Tribune* (July 11, 2022), available at <https://www.startribune.com/new-chief-federal-judge-patrick-schiltz-sees-caseloads-security-as-minnesota-courts-top-issues/600189351> (last visited Nov. 22, 2025).

⁶ See Nate Raymond, “Sister of US Supreme Court’s Barrett target of bomb threat, police say,” *Reuters* (March 13, 2025) available at <http://www.reuters.com/world/us/sister-us-supreme-courts-barrett-target-bomb-threat-police-say-2025-03-13/> (last visited Nov. 22, 2025).

⁷ Andrew Goudsward, “Man to plead guilty to attempted assassination of US Supreme Court Justice Kavanaugh,” *Reuters* (April 2, 2025) available at <http://www.reuters.com/legal/man-plead-guilty-attempted-assassination-us-supreme-court-justice-kavanaugh-2025-04-02/> (last visited Nov. 22, 2025); see Jordan Fischer, “California man pleads guilty to attempting to kill Supreme Court Justice Kavanaugh,” *WUSA9* (April 8, 2025) available at <http://www.wusa9.com/article/news/crime/california-man-pleads-guilty-to-attempting-to-kill-supreme-court-justice->

These incidents are just the tip of the iceberg. More than 100 judges this year across seven states have been “doxxed” with unsolicited pizza deliveries to their homes. Many of those orders were placed in the name Daniel Anderl. The disturbing references to Mr. Anderl make it clear that these deliveries are more than callous pranks. As Chief Judge of the Middle District of Florida Marcia Morales Howard noted, “It lets the judge know, ‘I know where you live, or I know where your daughter lives.’”⁸ Other judges have been the victims of “swatting” incidents designed to trigger large and potentially dangerous police responses to the judges’ homes.⁹

The experiences of state court judges across the country confirm that the rising judicial threat is widespread and persistent.¹⁰ In a 2024 survey collecting responses from 239 state court judges in Minnesota alone, 72% of the judges reported receiving threats because of their work, 75% confirmed that they worry about their safety, and nearly 80% of judges had taken steps to increase their personal safety (using their own money when the measure had an associated cost.) Several judges shared threats made against their minor children., one judge described an attempted break-in at their home, and several judges noted that they had or were considering moving following compromises of their home address.¹¹

Amid this disturbing trend, the Judiciary’s Court Security program has operated at a “hard freeze” for two consecutive years. One component of the program is the Judiciary’s Vulnerability Management Program (VMP), which implements the Daniel Anderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act that Congress passed with bipartisan support in honor of Judge Salas’s son.¹² The Anderl Act prohibits data brokers from selling judges’ personally identifiable information and enables federal judges and their family members to request

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⁸ Jim Ash, “Judges Grapple with Surge in Online Threats, Doxing, and Harassment,” The Florida Bar (June 9, 2025), available at <http://www.floridabar.org/the-florida-bar-news/judges-grapple-with-surge-in-online-threats-doxing-and-harassment> (last visited Nov. 22, 2025).

⁹ Barbara McQuade, “Opinion: Swatting and the dangerous rise of political violence,” The Salt Lake Tribune (January 24, 2024), available at <https://www.sltrib.com/opinion/commentary/2024/01/24/opinion-swatting-dangerous-rise/> (last visited on Nov. 22, 2025).

¹⁰ McDermott, Christine M., Evan Murphy, Patrick Grimes, and John Muffler. “Perceptions and Experiences with Judicial Security Threats: A Survey of US State Court Judges.” *Ct. Rev.* 60 (2024): 102. <https://ncjfcj.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Perceptions-Experiences-with-Judicial-Security-McDermott-at-al.pdf> (last visited on Nov. 22, 2025)

¹¹ Minnesota District Judges Association, “Judicial Safety Survey,” available at <https://www.house.mn.gov/comm/docs/WSil40vjfEKyTYE8ksCHlw.pdf> (last visited Nov. 22, 2025.)

¹² On December 14, 2020, a similar coalition to the undersigned of 51 Attorneys General sent a letter to Congressional Leadership urging the passage of the Daniel Anderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act. Now, as then, we unite across political party lines to call for the continued protection of our shared judicial system. *See* NAAG Letter, December 14, 2020, available at <http://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases20/NAAG-Daniel's-Law-Final.pdf> (last visited on Nov. 22, 2025).

that businesses and government agencies remove such information from their websites.¹³ But for the law to effectively protect judges, former judges, and family members, additional funding for VMP is necessary.¹⁴

More resources are also needed for courthouse security. Judge St. Eve explained that to continue paying Court Security Officer salaries during the “hard freeze,” the Judiciary has diverted funds away from courthouse visual monitoring systems and “Physical Access Control Systems that restrict access to non-public areas like judges’ chambers.”¹⁵ Judge St. Eve also explained that the requested funds are necessary to maintain critical systems and equipment, such as courthouse screening equipment, vehicle barriers, and other security essentials.¹⁶ Without adequate funding from Congress, Judge St. Eve warns, “we will see more and more instances of equipment failure, maintenance or replacement delays, and/or growing technological obsolescence of the Judiciary’s security equipment holdings.” Further, current funding levels cannot support the Judiciary’s plan to “harden” courthouses by installing break-resistant glass and other physical infrastructure improvements.¹⁷

Finally, Congress should address the funding needs of other agencies responsible for protecting federal judges and courthouses, including the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS).¹⁸ The Chief Justice stated in his year-end report that serious threats “have required the assignment of full-time U.S. Marshals Service security details for federal judges[.]”¹⁹ The rising number of threats prompted USMS to establish the Judicial Threat Branch (JTB) to “ensur[e] the agency’s judicial investigative capabilities can be distributed across the nation where needed.”²⁰ These efforts can only be effective if Congress provides adequate resources to support them.

Providing federal judges with resources to safely perform their work is not a political issue. It is a moral obligation and a practical necessity. Judges who fear for their safety are

¹³ See “Congress Passes the Daniel Aderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act” United States Courts (Dec. 16, 2022), available at <http://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/judiciary-news/2022/12/16/congress-passes-daniel-aderl-judicial-security-and-privacy-act> (last visited Nov. 22, 2025).

¹⁴ See Statement of Honorable Amy J. St. Eve at 11–12.

¹⁵ *Id.*, at 11.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Id.* at 17.

¹⁸ Statement of Honorable Robert J. Conrad Jr. at 2 (Calling for Congress to “increase funding for [USMS] to hire additional deputy marshals to improve judicial security.”).

¹⁹ 2024 Year End Report on the Federal Judiciary at 5.

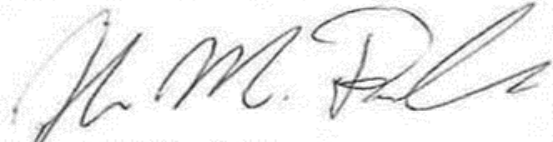
²⁰ *Id.*

less likely to meet the demands of their difficult work.²¹ And equally important is the safety of court staff, members of the public, and attorneys who appear in federal court—including many from our own offices.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let us know whether additional information from our offices would be useful to you as the Congress considers this important issue.



Keith Ellison
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²¹ See, e.g., Judge David McKeague, “Modernizing Security Measures to Protect Federal Judges and Their Families,” 104 JUDICATURE 54, 55 (Fall/Winter 2020-21), available at https://judicature.duke.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/12/McKeague_Fall2020.pdf (“When judges are fearful, it impedes their ability to do their jobs.”).



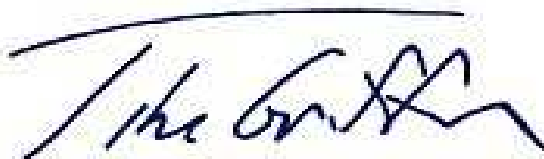
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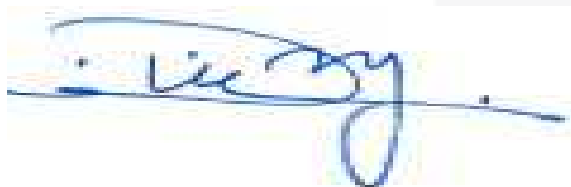
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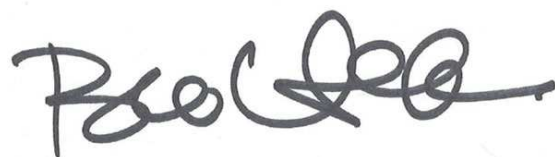
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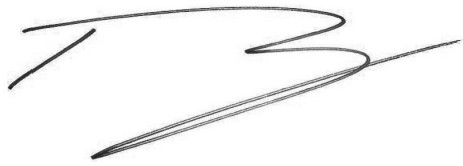
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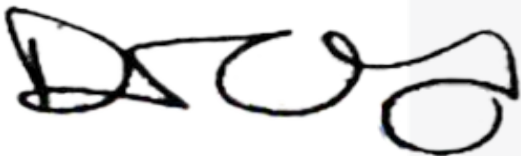
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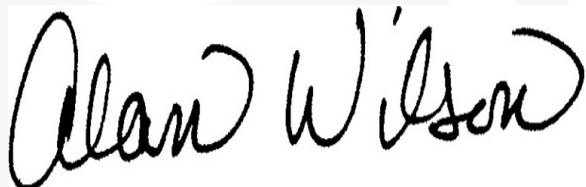
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A blue ink signature of Gordon C. Rhea, written in a cursive style.

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