



Properly Funding the Judiciary: A Fundamental Part of our Constitution and Our Democracy

The Judiciary carries out fundamental functions under the Constitution for a tiny fraction of the overall federal budget

- As the third branch of government, the Judiciary's core functions include adjudicating criminal, civil, bankruptcy and federal statutory cases; supervising defendants awaiting trial and criminals on post-conviction release; providing representation for indigent defendants; securing jurors for jury trials; and ensuring the safety of all those who work at or enter federal court facilities.
- To meet those core needs, the federal judiciary's appropriation represents less than 0.2% of the overall federal budget.

Subjecting the Judiciary's budget to sequestration is untenable

- While the impact of the prior sequester was problematic for virtually all who depend on federal funding, it was particularly challenging for the Judiciary, which has no control over the amount of work faced by the federal courts.
- As a result of the sequester two years ago, court staff were laid off or furloughed, causing grim consequences for public safety, fairness and efficiency in the court system, and justice itself. Examples included fewer probation officers to supervise criminal offenders released into the community, delays in resolving cases, a sharp decline in federal defender staffing levels, and reduced working hours for court security personnel.
- While the prior sequestration cuts to the Judiciary have been restored, the Judiciary continues to operate on a very lean budget today.

Properly funding the Judiciary needs to be a priority going forward

- As one of the core responsibilities of our nation for a functioning democracy, ensuring proper funding for the Judiciary needs to be a top priority in the FY 16 budget.
- The Judiciary's requested funding level of \$7 billion represents a modest increase to ensure the courts have the resources necessary to carry out the Judiciary's Constitutional responsibilities.