

Dear _____:

As of August 9, 2018, there were 125 vacant federal District Court Judgeships out of 677 nationwide, with 73 nominees pending. Imagine the crisis were the Courts to order that 18 out of the 100-member United States Senate not be seated or 80 members of the 435-member House of Representatives not be seated. This is not only a failure to timely replace existing vacant judgeships, but our federal District Courts also suffer from a lack of new judgeships. The worst of these appears to be my District, which is the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California. Our judges have recently written to you explaining that the last new judgeship for this District was created in 1978, when the population of the Eastern District was 2.5 million. The population now exceeds 8 million. Further, several of our judges are slated to retire soon. The remaining judges will be overwhelmed both because replacements are not timely made and because at least five new judgeships are needed to adequately accommodate the existing case load. If not enough appointments are made, civil cases in our District will no longer be heard, and the handling of criminal cases will slow beyond its already slow pace, which is three times slower than the national average. In sum, our access to the courts for civil cases will be eliminated, and access for criminal cases will be severely hindered.

Article III of our federal Constitution established the Supreme and lower Courts as a co-equal branch of our national government, but Congress is responsible for creating and funding District Court judgeships to meet the nation's judicial needs. The District Courts are the workhorses of the system, and the system cannot function unless the courts are adequately staffed. For these reasons, it is critical that Congress create the new Judgeships needed in my District and that the President timely nominate, and the Senate timely confirm, vacant judgeships. I would request and appreciate a personal response concerning this problem and the actions that are being taken to insure that I am able to access the federal court.

Thank you