

10th Congress State of the Judiciary Message

I. Introduction

In the last Judiciary Message, I recentered my focus on accessibility—that is, accessibility to the federal judiciary. And like in the last message, accessibility to the federal judiciary remains strong. That is evident in the initiatives courts have made, and so too in the number of cases that are making it to the courts. Here though, I have one thing to emphasize as I have repeatedly done: The number of attorneys in our judicial economy.

A lack of attorneys remains at the forefront of problems of accessibility to the judiciary. For one, litigating takes time. And even more so, the time roleplay-litigating consumes can be better spent somewhere else—say, school. Not many are willing to spend hours writing about why their Roblox case should be dismissed, and they shouldn't be anyways. That time can be better put somewhere else: School, family, friends, personal hygiene, work, exercise, etc. In online lingo, we sometimes refer to this as “touching grass.” This is where volunteers who enjoy roleplaying courtroom dramas come in. And the important word is “volunteers.” Attorneys (in more realistic sense, Roblox attorneys), are volunteers who take the place of parties in a “case” so that parties do not have to spend their time writing and researching legalese. Those attorneys *generally* enjoy roleplay-litigating. If they do not enjoy it, there are no financial

incentives to continue participating, so they are free to withdraw themselves whenever. This is a win-win situation and highlights the practical purpose of attorneys in the community.

The same can be said for a related reason. Litigating takes time, as I have said. It takes time, in most part, because it is a precise and complex endeavor. The law is laced with complexities and nuances. In pursuing or in defending a case, there is prerequisite knowledge one must possess in order for a case to begin. That knowledge might not be immediate to a common citizen. Take that, and consider too that procedural rules are precise and complex. In fact, even one mistake in a court filing that offends one rule of procedure can make or break a case so early on. A party must also consider that there is a difference between federal rules and local rules. Even more, a local rule in the District Court of the District of Columbia says that the Federal Rules of Procedure should be “construed . . . only to the extent applicable to Roblox.”¹ A regular attorney to our legal community that is accustomed to our practices likely knows how much real-life rule constructions may extend. A common citizen, or Roblox player for that matter? Most likely, no. What if a party wants to appeal? Well, there is a whole other world for that: More doctrines, more rules, more legalese. And what I have just detailed are only a small portion of what goes on. In sum, (volunteer) attorneys are important.

¹ See District Court for the District of Columbia, *Interim Rule on Rule Construction*, DDC | District Case Management – Trello (2024).

So, what must someone do when there are no attorneys? Courts can do all their might in finding one. But when all else fails, we have only one answer: You are on your own. If there are just not enough attorneys in our community, or even if none are willing to rise to the occasion (because, again, this is all volunteer based), then someone who wants and needs an attorney is out of luck. One must undertake the extensive process of researching and writing real life—or analogous to real life—rules, statutes, doctrines, and legal theory. And even with all that effort and time spent, one eventual result is most likely waiting for them: Defeat. Attorneys are important. They are the lifeblood of our judicial roleplaying community.

The first part of problem solving is recognizing the problem. The second part is doing the work. I am glad we have done both. As you may recall, my 7th Congress Judiciary Message discussed the Paralegal program, first brought into fruition by then-District Court Judge NezuSuccu, which was one of the first major initiatives in tackling the problem of a low number of attorneys. More recently, Congress reformed the District Court Bar with the District of Columbia Bar Act of 2025. With it, Congress has equipped the District Court Bar with the statutory capabilities it desperately required. The Bar is currently lead by Chief Judge DOJGOV, who serves concurrently as Director of the Bar, Chair of the Committee on Ethics, and Chair of the Committee on Legal Certification, and who I have no doubt will serve in those positions with distinction and honor.

The issue with the number of attorneys will continue to remain. But judicial actors, Congress, and others, all play a part in mitigating it. I am grateful to those people

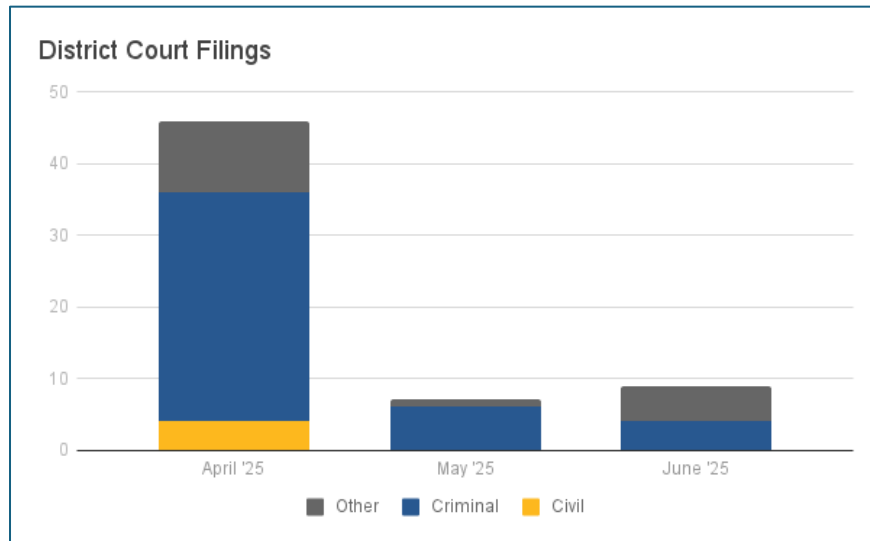
and Congress who play their part in giving our legal community the success it deserves to see.

II. Supreme Court's Caseload

This figure analyzes all initiated appeals starting April 1, 2025, until June 30, 2025. The total number of appeals filed in the Supreme Court in April was 0 which is a 100% decrease from March. The total number of appeals filed in the Supreme Court in May was 0. There was no change from the previous month. The total number of appeals filed in the Supreme Court in June was 1. 1 emergency application was received in June.

III. District Court's Caseload

This figure analyzes all initiated cases starting April 1, 2025, until June 30, 2025. A total of 46 cases have been filed or initiated in the District Court during April which is a 91.67% increase from March. Of those cases, 32 were criminal actions, 4 were civil actions, and 10 were contempt cases or disciplinary proceedings. A total of 7 cases have been filed or initiated in the District Court during May which is an 84.78% decrease from April. Of those cases, 6 were criminal actions, and 1 was a contempt case or disciplinary proceeding. A total of 9 cases have been filed or initiated in the District Court during June which is a 28.57% increase from May. Of those cases, 4 were criminal actions, and 5 were contempt cases or disciplinary proceedings.



IV. Conclusion

My best wishes.

NathanInslee

Chief Justice of the United States