



Supported Resolution 8—2022

In Support of Legislation to Protect State Court Judges

CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES

CONFERENCE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATORS

WHEREAS, recent tragic events, including the attempted murder of active State Court Judge Julie Kocurek in Texas, the murder of retired State Court Judge John Roemer in Wisconsin, the attempted murder of State Court Judge Joseph J. Bruzzese Jr. in Ohio, the planned assassination of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh in Maryland, and the murder of Daniel Anderl, son of targeted United States District Judge Ester Salas at the family home in New Jersey, have highlighted the vulnerability of state and federal judges and their immediate families; and

WHEREAS, both state and federal judges are essential public servants tasked with the important function of interpreting the law and administering justice in a fair and impartial manner and should be able to perform their public duties without fear of attack; and

WHEREAS, state court judges handle a majority of the litigation in the United States, processing 96% of the nation's annual litigation, including many federal causes of action under their concurrent jurisdictional authority; and

WHEREAS, state court judges interact with millions of litigants and members of the public on routine and complex issues and in cases often involving high emotion and volatility; and

WHEREAS, the shifting threat landscape includes heightened socio-political tensions surrounding the judicial process resulting in increased security challenges for all judges and their immediate families; and

WHEREAS, widespread availability of personal data and breaches of online privacy can easily expose judges and their immediate family members to increased security risks; and

WHEREAS, many state court systems lack the required resources and tools needed to address new threats to the privacy and the safety of state court judges and their immediate families; and

WHEREAS, coordination with federal executive agencies and the federal judiciary is necessary to protect all judges and their immediate families to ensure that threat and intelligence information is shared with the appropriate entities responsible for judicial security at all court levels; and

WHEREAS, proposed federal legislation is intended to improve the safety and security of federal judges and their immediate families but does not include any provisions for the protection of state court judges and their immediate families;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators:

- Call upon state legislatures to enact legislation to protect the safety of judges and their immediate families;

- Call upon federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to coordinate and share threat information and intelligence with each other and with the federal judiciary and state court systems as appropriate to protect judges and their immediate family members;
- Call upon the Congress and state legislatures to adopt legislation that would protect the personally identifiable information (PII) of state court judges and their immediate family members; and
- Call upon Congress to direct the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs to specifically identify state judicial protection as a critical and eligible activity for funding under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program.

Adopted as proposed by the CCJ/COSCA Security and Emergency Preparedness Committee at the CCJ/COSCA 2022 Annual Meeting on July 27, 2022.

On December 6, 2022, the NACM Board voted to support this resolution.