

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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May 5, 2025

Ms. Angela D. Caesar  
Clerk of the Court  
U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia  
333 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Ms. Caesar:

The Committee on the Judiciary is charged with conducting appropriate oversight of federal courts and federal judges.<sup>1</sup> Since the beginning of President Trump's second term, hundreds of lawsuits have been filed challenging the Trump Administration's policies, resulting in the issuance of over 30 nationwide injunctions.<sup>2</sup> Many of these nationwide injunctions have raised concerns that Article III judges are exceeding their constitutional authority by replacing the policy decisions of the duly elected President with their own preferences, eroding public trust in the integrity and fairness of our judicial system. Many high-profile cases challenging policy decisions of the Trump Administration have been filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia (District Court).<sup>3</sup> As Congress considers potential legislative reforms to address the abuse of nationwide injunctions and adjust the national distribution and local assignment of cases challenging Executive Branch policy decisions, we write to request information about the District Court's assignment of cases.

In particular, concerns have been raised about the assignment of high-profile cases to the District Court's Chief Judge James Boasberg.<sup>4</sup> Since March 15, 2025, Chief Judge James

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<sup>1</sup> Rules of the House of Representatives, R. X, 119th Cong. (2025).

<sup>2</sup> See *Special Collection: Trump Administration 2.0: Challenges to the Government*, CIVIL RIGHTS LITIG. CLEARINGHOUSE, <https://clearinghouse.net/collections/38759> (last visited Apr. 17, 2025) (listing many of the cases filed against the second Trump Administration); Application for a Stay of the Injunction Issued by the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts at 26, *Trump v. New Jersey*, No. 24A886 (Mar. 13, 2025) (stating that district courts have issued 15 nationwide injunctions against the Trump Administration "in February 2025 alone"). For reference, district judges only issued 14 nationwide injunctions against the federal government during the first three years of the Biden Administration. *Id.* (citing *District Court Reform: Nationwide Injunctions*, 137 HARV. L. REV. 1701, 1705 (2024)).

<sup>3</sup> See Jack Birle, *Plaintiffs suing Trump administration bring cases in districts with few or no Trump-appointed judges*, WASH. EXAM'R (Apr. 16, 2025).

<sup>4</sup> See Asher Notheis, *Eric Schmitt says Boasberg 'inserted himself' in case against Trump deportations*, WASH. EXAM'R (Apr. 7, 2025).

Boasberg has presided over a case challenging President Trump’s proclamation invoking the Alien Enemies Act (AEA) to deport illegal aliens associated with the terrorist organization Tren de Aragua.<sup>5</sup> Less than two weeks after being assigned the AEA case, Chief Judge Boasberg was then selected to preside over another high-profile case filed against the Trump Administration, this time concerning certain executive officials’ use of the messaging application Signal.<sup>6</sup> He has also been assigned cases challenging the Trump Administration’s actions concerning the Department of Government Efficiency<sup>7</sup> and federal funding for programs that violate federal civil rights laws, though the latter was subsequently dismissed per the plaintiff’s request.<sup>8</sup>

According to the D.C. District Court’s local rules, “cases shall be assigned to judges of this Court selected at random” based on the method devised by the Court.<sup>9</sup> Under this method:

The Clerk shall create a separate assignment deck in the automated system for each subclassification of civil and criminal cases established by the Court . . . . The decks will be created by the Liaison to the Calendar and Case Management Committee or the Liaison’s backup . . . . The Calendar and Case Management Committee will, from time to time determine and indicate by order the frequency with which each judge’s name shall appear in each designated deck, to effectuate an even distribution of cases among the active judges.<sup>10</sup>

Effectively, this process is like “drawing from a deck of cards, in which each judge is their own suit, with a number of cards equal to the number of cases they can draw before the case-assignment deck is reshuffled and reloaded.”<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the likelihood of a case being assigned to a particular judge “depends on how many cases the judge has already drawn from the deck and how many more cases the judge is required to draw that cycle.”<sup>12</sup>

While the District Court’s allocation process is intended to produce an “equal distribution of cases to all judges,”<sup>13</sup> in practice the distribution of cases can be unequal.<sup>14</sup> The Committee cannot independently verify the randomness of case assignments because the composition of assignment decks is kept secret.<sup>15</sup> The only individuals to whom the court clerk is permitted to

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<sup>5</sup> See *J.G.G. v. Trump*, No. 25-cv-766 (D.D.C. Mar. 15, 2025).

<sup>6</sup> See *Am. Oversight v. Hegseth*, No. 25-cv-883 (D.D.C. Mar. 25, 2025).

<sup>7</sup> See *Project on Gov’t Oversight v. Trump*, No. 25-cv-527 (D.D.C. Feb. 21, 2025).

<sup>8</sup> See *Erie Cnty. v. Corp. for Nat’l & Cmty. Serv.*, No. 25-cv-783 (D.D.C. Mar. 17, 2025).

<sup>9</sup> D.D.C. Local Civ. R. 40.3(a).

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> Spencer S. Hsu & Rachel Weiner, *How Trump’s Jan. 6 trial judge Tanya S. Chutkan was randomly selected*, WASH. POST (Aug. 1, 2023).

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> *Tripp v. Exec. Off. of the President*, 196 F.R.D. 201, 202 (D.D.C. 2000).

<sup>14</sup> See Hsu & Weiner, *supra* note 11 (stating that D.C. District Court judges do not have “an equal chance of getting [a particular] case”).

<sup>15</sup> See D.D.C. Local Civ. R. 40.9(a).

disclose this information are members of the Calendar and Case Management Committee and the Chief Judge.<sup>16</sup>

During the Biden-Harris Administration, public confidence in the judicial system fell to a record low of 35 percent as some politically motivated prosecutors used federal and state courts for lawfare tactics and leftwing activists sought to delegitimize the Supreme Court.<sup>17</sup> Restoring trust in the judicial system requires us to acknowledge and address the damage politicization and lawfare have done to the judicial system. We must understand the nature of the case assignment process in the District Court—which is considering a number of cases challenging the Trump Administration’s policy decisions—to consider and develop appropriate legislation.<sup>18</sup>

The Committee is authorized to conduct oversight of “[t]he judiciary and judicial proceedings” and “[f]ederal courts and judges,” pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives.<sup>19</sup> Already in the 119th Congress, the House has passed legislation limiting the authority of district judges to issue nationwide injunctions.<sup>20</sup> Other potential reforms include requiring payment of security for all injunctions,<sup>21</sup> constraining judges’ authority to set aside agency action,<sup>22</sup> and reforming case assignment systems in district courts to prevent tampering and ensure integrity.<sup>23</sup> We appreciate your assistance as we continue to gather information for our oversight to inform these and other legislative reforms.

Accordingly, to advance our oversight, we respectfully request that you provide the following information for each of the following cases: *Project on Government Oversight v. Trump*, No. 25-cv-527 (D.D.C. Feb. 21, 2025); *J.G.G. v. Trump*, No. 25-cv-766 (D.D.C. Mar. 15, 2025); *Erie County. v. Corporation for National and Community Service*, No. 25-cv-783 (D.D.C. Mar. 17, 2025); and *American Oversight v. Hegseth*, No. 25-cv-883 (D.D.C. Mar. 25, 2025):

1. Describe the process by which the presiding judge was assigned to the case, including the date of assignment and the method used.
2. Describe any deviations in the process for assigning this case compared to the standard assignment process.
3. State the number of “cards” each judge had already drawn from the relevant assignment deck when the case was assigned.
4. State the number of “cards” each judge had remaining in the relevant assignment deck when the case was assigned.

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<sup>16</sup> *Id.*

<sup>17</sup> Benedict Vigers & Lydia Saad, *Americans Pass Judgment on Their Courts*, GALLUP (Dec. 17, 2024).

<sup>18</sup> *See Trump v. Mazars USA, LLP*, 591 U.S. 848, 862 (2020) (“Without information, Congress would be shooting in the dark, unable to legislate wisely or effectively.” (internal quotation marks omitted)).

<sup>19</sup> Rules of the House of Representatives, R. X, 119th Cong. (2025).

<sup>20</sup> *See* No Rogue Rulings Act of 2025, H.R. 1526, 119th Cong. (2025).

<sup>21</sup> *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 65(c).

<sup>22</sup> *See* 5 U.S.C. § 706(2).

<sup>23</sup> *See* 28 U.S.C. § 137(a).

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5. Provide the number of judges who were eligible for assignment to the case when it was assigned.

Please provide this material as soon as possible but no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 19, 2025. If you have any questions about this matter, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-6906.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

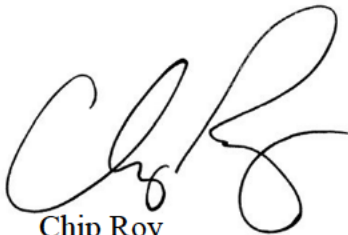
Sincerely,



Jim Jordan  
Chairman



Darrell Issa  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual  
Property, Artificial Intelligence, and the  
Internet



Chip Roy  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on the Constitution  
and Limited Government

cc: The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member

The Honorable Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, Artificial Intelligence, and the Internet

The Honorable Mary Gay Scanlon, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on the Constitution and Limited Government