

STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY C. STANCEU
Chief Judge
UNITED STATES COURT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE
before
The Subcommittee on
Financial Services and General Government of the
Committee on Appropriations of the
United States Senate

March 24, 2015

Chairman Boozman, Senator Coons, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to submit this statement on behalf of the United States Court of International Trade, which is established under Article III of the Constitution with exclusive nationwide jurisdiction over civil actions arising out of the administration and enforcement of the customs and international trade laws of the United States. As you know, the Court has its roots in the uniformity requirement of Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution (“all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States”) and in that way serves a vital role that contributes to the nation’s economic strength.

The Court’s Fiscal Year 2016 budget request is \$20,150,000, which is comprised of \$2,005,000 for mandatory appropriations and \$18,145,000 for discretionary appropriations. The discretionary portion of the appropriations request represents an increase of \$338,000, or 1.9 percent, from the Fiscal Year 2015 enacted discretionary appropriations of \$17,807,000. This modest increase reflects the necessary adjustments to the base in order to maintain current services, fund essential on-going operations and initiatives, and provide for adjustments in pay and benefits. It also accounts for other inflationary factors applied to the base, including an increase in pro-rata costs paid to the Federal Protective Service (FPS) for the critical and necessary security of the Federal Complex (including the Court) in lower Manhattan. Further, it reflects adjustments for security costs paid to the U.S. Marshals Service for the Court’s internal security officers.

The Court remains committed to the efficient and conservative management of its resources through sound fiscal practices. The Court continues to utilize cost

containment strategies in keeping with the overall administrative policies and practices of the Judicial Conference, particularly regarding security costs, equipment costs, technology, contractual obligations, and personnel. This is consistent with the Court's long-standing policy of requesting only funds that are absolutely needed for fulfilling the Court's judicial responsibilities, such as increases for pay, benefits, and other inflationary factors, and for essential on-going operations and initiatives of the Court.

Currently, the Court is working actively with the General Services Administration to release space in the Courthouse to the U.S. Marshals Service. If this initiative is successful, it will reduce the Court's rent bill while simultaneously improving security. Additionally, I would like to note that in Fiscal Year 2014, the Court transferred \$1.15 million to the Judiciary's Court Security Program to address critical security needs.

The Court continues to meet the objectives set forth in its Strategic Plan through the use of its annual appropriation and the Judiciary Information Technology Fund. These objectives provide access to the Court through the effective and efficient delivery of services and information to litigants, the bar, the public, judges, and staff. For a national court, this access is critical to realizing the mission of resolving disputes by (1) providing cost effective, courteous, and timely service; (2) providing independent, consistent, fair, and impartial interpretation and application of the customs and international trade laws; and (3) fostering improvements in customs and international trade law and practice, as well as in the overall administration of justice.

Specifically, technology remains a critical component of the Court's commitment to high quality service to its various constituencies. To this end, the requested appropriation will enable the Court to support and maintain its information technology program. This entails cyclical maintenance and, when necessary, replacement, of hardware and software to ensure that the Court's infrastructure will continue to support its present and future technological and telecommunications needs. During Fiscal Year 2014, the Court used its Judiciary Information Technology Fund successfully to strengthen its technological capabilities by: (1) upgrading the Storage Area Network for the COOP site; (2) installing a secondary firewall for redundancy purposes; (3) executing maintenance agreements for computer hardware and software applications; (4) continuing its support of its video conferencing system, data network and voice connections, wireless infrastructure, and Virtual Private Network System (VPN); (5) installing hard drive encryption software for laptops; and (6) cyclically upgrading its laptops.

In Fiscal Year 2015, the Court plans to expend funds on essential information technology projects to: (1) add redundancy to the core switch for the network; (2) upgrade the Polycom conference phone system from analog to digital; (3) upgrade and support existing software applications; (4) purchase new software applications to ensure the continued operational efficiency of the Court; (5) install virtual desktop infrastructure; (6) purchase log management software for the Court's network;

(7) purchase document management software to streamline workflow for court staff; and (8) replace computer desktops, monitors and printers in accordance with the Judiciary's cyclical replacement program. Additionally, the Court will continue to support its long-standing commitment to provide developmental and educational programs for staff on subjects pertaining to technology and job-related skills.

In Fiscal Year 2016, the Court again will use its carry-forward balances in the Judiciary Information Technology Fund for information technology initiatives that support the Court's short-term and long-term information technology needs. Additionally, the Court will continue to maximize the use and functionality of common and individual office space. This effort is part of the Court's on-going rent review process. The Court also will continue its cyclical replacement and maintenance program for equipment, furniture, and offices to help extend the useful life of equipment and furnishings. Moreover, the Fiscal Year 2016 request once again includes funds for the continued upgrade, support, and maintenance of the Court's internal and perimeter security systems. Further, the Court will seek to continue its efforts to address the educational needs of the bar and Court staff. Finally, the Court, in Fiscal Year 2016, will build on its prior efforts in cost-saving negotiations of contracts with GSA, FPS, and public and private companies.

I personally extend my deepest appreciation to this Committee and the entire Congress for recognizing the needs of the Court by providing adequate funding in Fiscal Year 2015 to maintain current services so that the Court can fulfill its commitment to the administration of justice for all.

The Court's "General Statement and Information" and "Justification of Changes," which provide more detailed descriptions of each line item adjustment, were submitted as part of the Judiciary Fiscal Year 2016 Congressional Budget Justification. If the Committee requires any additional information, we will be pleased to provide it.