



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

CLARE E. CONNORS
ATTORNEY GENERAL

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Hawaii Attorney General Joins Bipartisan Coalition Supporting Federal Legislation to Protect Safety of Federal Judges and their Families

HONOLULU – Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors joined a bipartisan group of 51 Attorneys General in a letter urging Congress to pass legislation aimed at protecting the safety of federal judges and their families.

Addressed to leaders of both the House and Senate Judiciary Committees, the letter supports passage of the Daniel Anderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act or similar legislation. That bill would protect the confidentiality of personal identifying information of members of the federal judiciary in public records, and limit the distribution of that information online and by data brokers.

Co-led by New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal and Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich, the letter calls passage of such legislation an “urgent” matter in light of attacks and increasing threats against members of the federal judiciary, and notes that the legislation has bipartisan support in both houses of Congress.

“The act proposes common sense measures to keep our federal judiciary safe,” said Attorney General Connors. “Making it more difficult for bad actors to obtain personal information from public records addresses an unnecessary security threat for members of the judiciary and their families.”

The Daniel Anderl Judicial Security Act is named for 20-year-old Daniel Anderl, the late son of Judge Esther Salas of the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey.

Daniel was killed on July 19, 2020, when an attorney who had appeared in a case before Judge Salas – a man described in today’s letter as “deranged” – appeared at her home and shot both Daniel and Judge Salas’ husband. The judge’s husband was critically wounded but survived the attack.

Today’s letter to Congress recalls that four federal judges have been murdered since 1979, including District Judge John Wood, District Judge Richard Daronco, Circuit

Judge Robert Vance and District Judge John Roll. In addition, two family members of District Judge Joan Lefkow were killed in a targeted attack on her home in 2005.

The letter notes that incidents, inappropriate communications and threats against federal judges and others protected by the U.S. Marshals Service have been steadily climbing in recent years, as evidenced by a spike in such incidents from 2,357 in 2016 to 4,449 in 2019.

“Increasingly, public servants are being threatened with physical violence and death simply for carrying out their duties in accordance with the Oath they swore to uphold the Constitution,” the letter states.

Introduced in the Senate on September 24, 2020, and in the House on October 13, 2020, the Daniel Aderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act would, among other initiatives:

- Protect judges and their families by requiring federal agencies to maintain the confidentiality of judges’ personally identifiable information upon request;
- Authorize funding for state and local governments to adopt similar measures;
- Prohibit data brokers from selling, licensing, trading, purchasing, or otherwise providing or making available for consideration judges’ personally identifiable information;
- Create an enforceable mechanism for judges and their immediate family members to secure removal of their personally identifiable information from the Internet.

In light of the tragic death of Daniel Aderl and the escalating danger to federal judges and their families everywhere, today’s letter expresses full support for the proposed legislation named in Daniel’s memory and notes that the Judicial Conference of the United States and the American Bar Association, among others, support such legislation.

The letter concludes by noting that, while New Jersey and other states have enacted similar judicial protection laws on a state level, only federal legislation can “protect federal judges and their families wherever they reside and ensure uniform enforcement nationwide.”

A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).

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For more information, contact:

Krishna F. Jayaram
Special Assistant to the Attorney General
(808) 586-1284
Email: ATG.PIO@hawaii.gov
Web: <http://ag.hawaii.gov>
Twitter: @ATGHlgov