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Joan Claybrook, President

Federal District Judges Are Vastly Outnumbered by State Judges

The class action legislation (S. 5) currently before the U.S. Senate will result in most class actions being removed by corporations from state courts of general jurisdiction to federal district courts. This would occur at a time when our federal district courts are already overcrowded and face a continuing budget crisis.¹ The result will be significant delay of these very complex cases in federal court. And in some cases a delay in a case can result in a denial of justice.

The number of state judges sitting in the state courts of general jurisdiction (variously named circuit, county, common pleas, district, or superior courts) total 9,200. The corresponding number of federal district court judges is only 678. This means there are 14 times more state judges than there are federal judges.

Similar inequities apply in the number of judges in key states, as illustrated in the following table.

State	State Judges in General Jurisdiction Courts	Federal Judges in District Courts
Arizona	159	13
Arkansas	115	8
California	1,498	62
Connecticut	180	8
Florida	509	37
Indiana	100	10
Louisiana	211	22
Maine	16	3
Nebraska	106	4
New York	593	52
Ohio	376	20
Oregon	166	6
Pennsylvania	409	38
Rhode Island	22	3
South Carolina	48	10
Vermont	14	2
Washington	175	11
All other states	4,503	369
Total	9,200	678

Source: National Center for State Courts, State Court Caseload Statistics 2003, State Court Structure Charts. 2003 Judicial Business, Annual Report of the Director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, Table X-1A.

¹ Year-end Report on the Federal Judiciary, William Rehnquist, Chief Justice, U.S. Supreme Court, January 5, 2005.