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## **2003 YEAR-END REPORT ON THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY**

### **I. Overview**

This Year-End Report on the Federal Judiciary is my 18th.

I am pleased to report that the Senate confirmed 55 District Court judges during 2003, leaving only 27 vacancies out of 680 judgeships. At the same time, 13 Court of Appeals judges were confirmed, but 17 nominations remain pending.

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### **III. The Year in Review**

#### The Supreme Court of the United States

This year we broke ground on our long-anticipated building modernization program. It is my hope that we remain on schedule and complete the project under budget.

The total number of case filings in the Supreme Court increased from 7,924 in the 2001 Term to 8,255 in the 2002 Term - an increase of 4 percent. Filings in the Court's *in forma pauperis* docket increased from 6,037 to 6,386 - a 5.8 percent rise. The Court's paid docket decreased by 17 cases, from 1,886 to 1,869 - a 1 percent decline. During the 2002 Term, 84 cases were argued and 79 were disposed of in 71 signed opinions, compared to 88 cases argued and 85 disposed of in 76 signed opinions in the 2001 Term. No cases from the 2002 Term were scheduled for re-argument in the 2003 Term. This year the Court reconvened a month earlier than usual to hear a full day's argument in the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act cases. Written opinions deciding the cases were handed down in December.

#### The Federal Courts' Caseload

In Fiscal Year 2003, the federal courts experienced record highs in filings in most program areas, and a decline in only one. Filings in the 12 regional courts of appeals grew 6 percent from 57,555 to 60,847, a record number.<sup>3</sup> Criminal case filings increased 5 percent to an all-time high of 70,642, surpassing the previous record reported in 1932, the year before the Prohibition Amendment was repealed.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, civil filings declined 8 percent to 252,962.<sup>5</sup> Filings in the U.S. bankruptcy courts increased 7 percent from 1,547,669 to 1,661,996, the second consecutive year filings have set a record.<sup>6</sup> The number of persons on probation and supervised release went...

**The Supreme Court of the United States - Caseload Statistics**  
in the YEAR-END REPORTS ON THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY for 2000-2004

Report for	Statement	Term	Case filings	In forma pauperis	Paid docket	Cases argued	Cases disposed of	Signed opinions
		1998	7,109	5,047	2,061	90	84	75
		1999	7,377	5,282	2,092	83	79	74
2000	The total number of case filings in the Supreme Court increased from 7,109 in the 1998 Term to 7,377 in the 1999 Term - an increase of 3.8%. Filings in the Court's <i>in forma pauperis</i> docket increased from 5,047 to 5,282 - a 4.7% rise. The Court's paid docket increased by 31 cases, from 2,061 to 2,092 - a 1.5% increase. During the 1999 Term, 83 cases were argued and 79 were disposed of in 74 signed opinions, compared to 90 cases argued and 84 disposed of in 75 signed opinions in the 1998 Term	2000	7,852	5,897	1,954	86	83	77
2001	The total number of case filings in the Supreme Court increased from 7,377 in the 1999 Term to 7,852 in the 2000 Term -- an increase of 6.4%. Filings in the Court's <i>in forma pauperis</i> docket increased from 5,282 to 5,897 -- an 11.6% rise. The Court's paid docket decreased by 138 cases, from 2,092 to 1,954 -- a 6.6% decline. During the 2000 Term, 86 cases were argued and 83 were disposed of in 77 signed opinions, compared to 83 cases argued and 79 disposed of in 74 signed opinions in the 1999 Term.	2001	7,924	6,037	1,886	88	85	76
2002	The total number of case filings in the Supreme Court increased from 7,852 in the 2000 Term to 7,924 in the 2001 Term -- an increase of 1%. Filings in the Court's <i>in forma pauperis</i> docket increased from 5,897 to 6,037 -- a 2.4% rise. The Court's paid docket decreased by 68 cases, from 1,954 to 1,886 -- a 3.5% decline. During the 2001 Term, 88 cases were argued and 85 were disposed of in 76 signed opinions, compared to 86 cases argued and 83 disposed of in 77 signed opinions in the 2000 Term.	2002	8,255	6,386	1,869	84	79	71
2003	The total number of case filings in the Supreme Court increased from 7,924 in the 2001 Term to 8,255 in the 2002 Term - an increase of 4 percent. Filings in the Court's <i>in forma pauperis</i> docket increased from 6,037 to 6,386 - a 5.8 percent rise. The Court's paid docket decreased by 17 cases, from 1,886 to 1,869 - a 1 percent decline. During the	2003	7,814	6,092	1,722	91	89	73

Report for	Statement	Term	Case filings	In forma pauperis	Paid docket	Cases argued	Cases disposed of	Signed opinions
	2002 Term, 84 cases were argued and 79 were disposed of in 71 signed opinions, compared to 88 cases argued and 85 disposed of in 76 signed opinions in the 2001 Term.							
2004	The total number of case filings in the Supreme Court decreased from 8,255 in the 2002 Term to 7,814 in the 2003 Term -- a decrease of 5.3 percent. Filings in the Court's <i>in forma pauperis</i> docket decreased from 6,386 to 6,092 -- a 4.6 percent decline. The Court's paid docket decreased by 147 cases, from 1,869 to 1,722 -- a 7.9 percent decline. During the 2003 Term, 91 cases were argued and 89 were disposed of in 73 signed opinions, compared to 84 cases argued and 79 disposed of in 71 signed opinions in the 2002 Term.	2004						
	<b>TOTALS</b>							
	<b>AVERAGES</b>		<b>7,722</b>	<b>5,790</b>	<b>1,936</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>74</b>