CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — Extensions of Remarks
August 5, 1999

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Southern California Federal Judgeship Act of 1999. I am proud to be joined in this effort by my colleagues from San Diego, Rep Ron PACKARD, Rep. DUNCAN HUNTER, and Rep. BRIAN BILBRAY. This important legislation will authorize four additional Federal district court judges, three permanent and one temporary, to the Southern District of California.

A recent judicial survey ranks the Southern District of California as the busiest court in the nation by Number of criminal felony cases filed and total number of weighted cases per judge. In 1998, the Southern District had a weighted caseload of 1,006 cases per judge. By comparison, the Central District of California had a weighted filing of 424 cases per judge; the Eastern District of California had a weighted filing of 601 cases per judge; and the Northern District of California had a weighted filing of 464 cases per judge.

The Southern District consists of the San Diego and Imperial Counties of California, and shares a 200-mile border with Mexico. According to the U.S. Customs Service, as much as 70 percent of the cocaine smuggled into the United States from Mexico enters through this court district. Additionally, the court faces a substantial number of our Nation's immigration cases. Further multiplying the district's caseload is an agreement between the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the State of California that calls for criminal aliens to be transferred to prison facilities in this district upon nearing the end of their State sentences. All these factors combine to create a tremendous need for additional district court judges.

I hope that all my colleagues will join those of us from San Diego and help the people of Southern California by authorizing additional district court judges.