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*Federal Administrative Law Judges: The Relevance of Past Choices to Future Directions*

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Abstract by Sarah P. Kenney

This article discusses the appointment process for Administrative Law Judges (ALJs). This discussion includes a historical overview of the development of the ALJ system, which Congress established in 1946 via the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). Also, it includes an overview of the ALJ's predecessor system of hearing examiners. By highlighting the evolution of ALJs since the APA's inception, the Article demonstrates the delicate balance between sheltering ALJs from agency influence and ensuring the appointment of qualified ALJs. Additionally, this article provides a summary of Congress' attitudes toward the use of ALJs throughout the 1970s. A major component of this discussion is an analysis of both benefits and non-benefits administrations, including how their differences and similarities impact the ALJ appointment process. Finally, the article suggests methods for enhancing efficiency within the ALJ appointment process.