

The logo for the New York City Bar, featuring the text "NEW YORK CITY BAR" in a serif font, centered between two horizontal blue bars.

NEW YORK  
CITY BAR

March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Dear Legislator:

As you approach the final negotiations for the 2007-08 budget, I urge you to enact a pay raise for New York's judges. Our state deserves an unparalleled judiciary, and adding a ninth year to the wait for an increase in salaries is unfair to our judiciary and ultimately, to the citizens of our state. The cost of living has increased 26% since New York judges last received a pay raise, and as a result, they often earn less than first-year associates at many New York City law firms.

When attorneys choose public service and pursue a judgeship over private practice, they do so knowing that they are giving up the full salary that they may earn in the private sector, and we do not believe that judges' salaries need to be on par. However they must be fair, so that good judges are not forced off of the bench due to rising living expenses.

Furthermore, as judges have waited for a pay raise, they have maintained excellence in New York's courts as the caseloads have grown steadily more burdensome and legal issues ever more complex. Maintaining quality in the increasingly challenging judicial field requires adequate compensation, and providing a raise in the next budget reinforces the priority that New York puts on its superb courts.

Judges should be provided compensation commensurate with the solemn duty of dispensing justice.

Sincerely,

Barry Kamins