

Transcript of Closing Remarks at the October 14, 2021 Convocation:
Watchdogs or Lap Dogs? The Ethical Challenges Facing Government Lawyers

Paul C. Saunders:

On behalf of our co-sponsor and all the members of the Judicial Institute on Professionalism in the Law, I want to thank all of the participants in this program. I thought that it was extraordinarily incisive. I thought it was, not only informative, but informed, and I can't thank you enough for helping us present this program. I thought it was just absolutely spectacular. I would also like to thank those who attended today's program. And we all collectively hope that you found the presentations in this program not only interesting, but challenging, and somewhat troublesome. The issues that were discussed are not only important, but there seems to be a consensus that the existing principles or standards for government lawyers may be insufficient to deal with all of the ethical challenges that government lawyers face. So our mutual challenge is to continue the dialogue and to make meaningful recommendations for change. And on behalf of the New York State Judicial Institute on Professionalism in the Law, I can assure you that we will do our part in this important endeavor.

It's impossible to thank everyone who helped us put this program together, but I must mention and thank a few people whose contributions were far above the call of duty. Our ethics advisors included Professor Stephen Gillers from NYU, Professor Bruce Green from Fordham, Professor Brad Wendel from Cornell, Professor John Barrett and Dean Michael Simons from St. John's. Their collective advice and wisdom, and guidance, was invaluable, and we thank them for all of that. I would also like to recognize our Chief Judge, Janet DiFiore, for her generous and thoughtful introduction to our program, and for her continuing encouragement and support for the work of the Judicial Institute, and the commission to reimagine the future of New York's courts. Most of all, I would like to thank the person without whom this program could not have succeeded as well as it has. Our Counsel, Rochelle Klempner. Always on the job, her assistance and advice was intense, meticulous, and careful. Thank you Rochelle very much for everything you have done to make this program a reality and a success.

Thank you all very much. Good afternoon.