



PRESS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

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Hon. Paul G. Feinman to Lead State's Justice Task Force in Examining Racial Disparities in New York's Criminal Justice System

NEW YORK—Chief Judge Janet DiFiore today announced that Hon. Paul G. Feinman, Associate Judge, New York State Court of Appeals, will lead the New York State Justice Task Force in studying racial disparities in New York's criminal justice system. Judge Feinman will serve as Chair of the Justice Task Force, assisting its co-chairs to carry out the Task Force's mission to eradicate the harms caused by wrongful convictions.

Formed in 2009, the Task Force is made up of judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, law enforcement officials, victim advocates and others across the criminal justice system. Its work has led to major statutory changes to the procedures used to conduct eyewitness identifications and interrogations, among other reforms.

In 2017, Chief Judge DiFiore, a former Justice Task Force co-chair, announced the expansion of the Task Force's mission to include the study of issues relating to bail and speedy trial, as well as the broader issues of efficiency and accessibility throughout New York's justice system that have been the focus of her Excellence Initiative. More recently, she directed the Task Force members to focus their attention on the examination of racial disparities in the criminal justice system at all key stages of the process, from arrest through sentencing.

“I commend the Justice Task Force members for their efforts in taking on some of the most difficult and pressing issues facing New York’s criminal justice system. Institutional racism is perhaps the most significant and complex issue the Task Force has ever had to consider. The importance of tackling it head-on cannot be understated, particularly at this critical moment in our nation’s history,” said Chief Judge DiFiore. “I am so pleased that Judge Feinman has accepted this appointment to lead the Task Force in this and other endeavors as it carries out its vital mission. I have utmost confidence that under his stewardship the Task Force will rise to the challenge and conduct a meaningful, thorough analysis of these issues. I look forward to the Task Force’s conclusions and recommendations as we work together to advance the cause of justice. Additionally, I am grateful to Davis Polk & Wardwell for its valuable assistance, and its commitment to the Task Force’s mission to improve the accuracy of the criminal justice system and ensure equal justice for all.”

To learn more about the Justice Task Force, visit: www.nyjusticetaskforce.com.

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