



PRESS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Jonathan Lippman
Chief Administrative Judge**

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Judicial Election Qualification Commissions Members Appointed Nominees to Ensure Quality of Judicial Elections Through Careful Review of Judicial Candidates' Qualifications

NEW YORK—Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye and Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman today announced the appointment of the members of the Independent Judicial Election Qualification Commissions, the newly established statewide network of screening panels to review the qualifications of judicial election candidates. The 15-member, independent commissions were named by the Chief Judge, the Presiding Justices, the New York State Bar Association and local bar associations. Beginning April 16, 2007, a commission in each judicial district will evaluate local candidates for elective judicial office to ensure they possess the qualities necessary for effective judicial performance. Assessments of candidates will be based on crucial judicial values, specifically, professional ability; character, independence and integrity; reputation for fairness and lack of bias; and temperament, including courtesy and patience.

“Public confidence in the judiciary rests upon the assurance of well-qualified judicial candidates,” said Judge Kaye. “These commissions serve this vital goal by letting voters know which judicial candidates were evaluated by independent screening panels and found qualified to serve on the bench. This is an important step toward promoting informed voter participation in judicial elections and increasing public trust in our judicial system.”

Judge Lippman added, “Appointees to these commissions represent both the legal profession and the public at large, and are community members within the districts they serve. They will base their selections not only on careful assessment of candidates’ potential to be effective public servants on the bench, but also help open the candidate-designation process to a

broader pool of potential candidates. These commissions represent one of the best methods available for improving our current judicial elective system.”

The establishment of a statewide judicial candidate screening process was approved by the New York Court of Appeals in response to a recommendation of the Commission to Promote Public Confidence in Judicial Elections. The panel, convened by Chief Judge Kaye and chaired by John Feerick, former Dean of Fordham Law School and Chair of the Commission on Government Integrity, issued its third and final report in February 2006. The complete text of the Commission’s report recommending Independent Judicial Election Qualification Commissions is available at <http://nycourts.gov/reports/JudicialElectionsReport.pdf>. Part 150 of the Rules of the Chief Administrator is available at <http://www.nycourts.gov/rules/chiefadmin/150.shtml>.

The complete list of appointees to the Independent Judicial Election Qualification Commissions can be found online at www.nycourts.gov/press/jeqc-members.shtml.