

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Friday, January 10, 2025 2:46 PM

To: 'sdri@law.wisc.edu'; 'miriam.seifter@wisc.edu'; 'robert.yablon@wisc.edu'; 'bgwilde@wisc.edu'; 'dclinger@wisc.edu'; 'bryna.godar@wisc.edu'; 'adam.sopko@wisc.edu'; 'harry.black@wisc.edu'; 'emily.lau@wisc.edu'

Cc: 'evan.schumacher@wisc.edu'

Subject: **PRIMARY-SOURCE, DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE: "to advance research and dialogue" on New York State "democracy, government institutions, and public law"**

TO: [State Democracy Research Initiative](#)
(University of Wisconsin Law School)

This follows my brief phone conversation at about 11:15 am this morning with Program Coordinator Evan Schumacher, who picked up my call (608-890-2923) and then, seemingly, disconnected what had been an amiable, productive conversation, upon seeing the Center for Judicial Accountability's website, www.judgewatch.org, to which I directed him in substantiation of my call, the purpose of which, as I stated, was to alert the State Democracy Research Initiative that our non-partisan, non-profit citizens' organization has a "goldmine" of primary-source, documentary evidence to advance your research pertaining to New York State.

As Mr. Schumacher identified himself as your program coordinator, I began by noting your scheduled [May 30, 2025 program "The Work of State Supreme Courts"](#) and told him that **research into New York's highest state court, the New York Court of Appeals, is essential because its dysfunctioning has resulted in the unconstitutionality of New York state governance, in vast respects**. I believe it was when I inquired as to the sources on which the State Democracy Research Initiative relies for its information about the New York Court of Appeals that Mr. Schumacher, rather than transferring my call to the attorney co-directors, attorney executive director, or attorney staff who could address that important issue – or to pass my call to Staff Attorney Bryna Godar, who I specifically stated I wished to speak with regarding her July 2024 report "[State Judicial Conduct Commissions: The Challenge of Judging Judges](#)" – hurriedly gave me the Initiative's generic e-mail address, ignored my protests for transfer of the call, and then seemingly disconnected the call.

Within a minute or two, I called back, but it went into voice mail – on which I left a message stating what had happened. That was more than three hours ago and I have received no call-back from Mr. Schumacher or anyone else.

As I stated to Mr. Schumacher, the Center for Judicial Accountability has **so much** primary-source, documentary evidence germane to your New York State research that it was hard for me to figure out with whom I should speak with first. In addition to Staff Attorney Godar, Staff Attorney Adam Sopko is high on the list, in view of his January 2023 article "[Constitutional Norms and State Judicial Confirmations](#)", extensively commenting on and citing to the events in 2021 and 2022 pertaining to New York Court of Appeals confirmations. Also Harry Isaiah Black who participated as [counsel for "New York State Legal Scholars" for a July 2024 amicus curiae brief to the New York Court of Appeals in *Stefanik, et al. v. Hochul, et al.*](#) So, too, whoever succeeded your former legal research director, Allie Boldt, whose November 2023 report "[Direct Democracy in the States: A 50-State Survey of the Journey to the Ballot](#)" includes a webpage for [New York's constitutional amendments process](#) and as to which your website also features, as part of "[Our Work](#)", a November 2023 [Yale Law Review](#) article "[The Right to Amend State Constitutions](#)".

In conclusion – and in keeping with the State Democracy Research Initiative's "[Mission & Vision](#)", featured on your homepage:

“The State Democracy Research Initiative seeks to advance research and dialogue on state-level democracy, government institutions, and public law across the nation. By focusing on the states, which traditionally receive less attention than the federal government in legal circles, the Initiative serves as a much-needed resource for academics, courts, policymakers, advocates, and the public”,

with the above-underscored portion being additionally excerpted and emblazoned – I look forward to that promised “dialogue” and the “research” to be advanced thereby through the treasure-trove of primary-source, documentary evidence of the collapse of New York’s “democracy, government institutions, and public law”, posted on our website, spanning 50 years, with two cases encapsulating that evidence, now at the New York Court of Appeals on two appeals of right, as Mr. Schumacher would have reasonably seen from our homepage.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

www.judgewatch.org

914-421-1200

elena@judgewatch.org