

From: D. Killelea <dkillelea@gilmourkillelea.com>
Sent: Monday, October 28, 2024 4:23 PM
To: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
Cc: anoble@eriebar.org; Lauren Breen; jph@harringtonmahoney.com

Subject: **RE: The Erie County Bar Association's Oct 22nd press release announcing its "Qualified" rating of Assemblyman Michael Norris to be a Supreme Court Justice**

Dear Ms. Sassower:

Your email of October 27, 2024 regarding the Bar Association of Erie County ("BAEC") rating of a candidate for New York State Supreme Court Justice in the 8th Judicial District has been forwarded to me for a response. As you already know from your examination of the BAEC's bylaws and previous communications, the rating process by its Judiciary Committee is strictly confidential. Because of this, the only information which it can release to the public is the final rating for each candidate. Therefore, it cannot provide you with any further information. It does, however, thank you for your participation in providing information to the Judiciary Committee.

Best regards,

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From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Sunday, October 27, 2024 1:05 PM
To: anoble@eriebar.org
Cc: jph@harringtonmahoney.com; D. Killelea <dkillelea@gilmourkillelea.com>; skohlbacher@eriebar.org; sbelasik@eriebar.org
Subject: The Erie County Bar Association's Oct 22nd press release announcing its "Qualified" rating of Assemblyman Michael Norris to be a Supreme Court Justice

TO: [Erie County Bar Association Executive Director Anne Noble](#)

I have just discovered, on the [Erie County Bar Association's website](#), its [October 22nd press release](#) of "Additional Ratings for Judicial Candidates", whose only difference from its [July 23rd press release](#) of ratings for four Supreme Court justice candidates, for four seats, is that Robert Richardson is replaced by Michael Norris.

Assemblyman Norris' "Qualified" rating is notwithstanding the phone conversation we had together on September 23rd, summarized by my below September 24th e-mail to you, stating:

"As discussed, [Assemblyman Norris](#), a member of the Assembly's Judiciary Committee, Ways and Means Committee, Rules Committee, and Election Law Committee, has corrupted his office to advance himself politically and enrich himself financially – and this is the subject of fully-documented criminal and ethics complaints I filed against him and his fellow legislators – and of lawsuits against them, two of which are LIVE, both encompassing the lawsuit commenced in September 2016, which spanned Assemblyman Norris' first three years in office. The webpage I created on CJA's website, www.judgewatch.org, pertaining to Assemblyman Norris and posting my e-mails to him, and which I showed you, is accessible from the prominent homepage link "[ELECTIONS 2004: Cleaning Up NY's Corrupt & Unconstitutional State Governance – starting with its most important D.A. race: Albany County](#)" – via its link for [Supreme Court and other judicial races](#). The direct link is here: <https://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/elections/2024/norris-michael.htm>."

On October 1st, in response to this e-mail, I received a phone call from Judiciary Committee Vice Chair Harrington, with whom I spoke for nearly an hour about Norris' corruption in office, disqualifying him from ANY office of public trust and mandating his indictment for corruption of constitutional, lawful state governance, including pertaining to his own larcenous legislative salary – and the salary he expects to be paid as a Supreme Court justice – and for which he would be indicted by the re-election-seeking D.A.s of Erie and Niagara Counties with current geographic jurisdiction over him as an assemblymember, were it not for the fact that they themselves are beneficiaries of larcenous D.A. salaries. And, were these D.A.s not also beneficiaries of backroom political deals, they would be investigating the backroom deal that gave Assemblyman Norris a cross-endorsed candidacy for Supreme Court and slipped in his chief of staff to run for his Assembly seat. As I told Mr. Harrington, these machinations, subverting elections and process, are a *modus operandi* in Erie and Niagara Counties and throughout the state precisely because of legislators like Norris, a member of the Assembly Election Law Committee.

Mr. Harrington cc'd Judiciary Chair Killelea, Assistant Executive Director Kohlbacher, and you on his [October 2nd e-mail to me](#), which I did not see until [October 19th, when I responded](#), with cc's to all, reiterating that "CJA's webpage pertaining to Assemblyman Norris' corruption as an assembly member – covered up by the D.A.s, New York's other corrupted 'public protection' entities, & the courts, is [here](#)."

The Bar Association's October 22nd press release furnishes no details as to the basis of Assemblyman Norris' "Qualified" ratings. It states however, under the heading "**The Judiciary Committee is nonpartisan**", that "Ratings are done by a committee of 29 lawyers" and, under the heading "**Criteria and Process are Comprehensive**", that "Judicial candidates are evaluated on criteria necessary to hold judicial office, including integrity...and knowledge of the law. Judicial candidates are asked to complete a written questionnaire and are also interviewed as part of a multi-faceted rating process. ..."

Inasmuch as the ONLY rating possible for Assemblyman Norris, based on the open-and-shut, primary-source, documentary evidence I furnished, was “Not Recommended” – indeed such evidence mandated that the Bar refer him to ethics and criminal authorities pursuant to [Rule 8.3 of New York’s Rules of Professional Conduct](#) -- please confirm that my e-mail(s) and the webpage were furnished and reviewed by the “committee of 29 lawyers” and advise as to what findings of fact and conclusions of law were made with respect thereto and whether Assemblyman Norris was questioned about it – and what his response was.

Finally, I reiterate my request for the names of the Committee’s members – other than Chair Killelea and Vice Chair Harrington, whose names and titles I found on [the Bar’s website for the Judiciary Committee](#) – and I additionally reiterate my request for the Committee’s rules and procedures, including a blank copy of the questionnaire that Assemblyman Norris was required to complete – information I requested by my below September 24th e-mail and which its “Qualified” rating of him makes all the more imperative.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
www.judgewatch.org
914-421-1200

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>

Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 10:14 AM

To: 'anoble@eriebar.org' <anoble@eriebar.org>

Subject: Erie County Bar Association's screening & evaluation of the qualifications of Assemblyman Michael Norris to be a Supreme Court Justice

TO: [Erie County Bar Association Executive Director Anne Noble](#)

Thank you for calling me bright and early yesterday morning, at 8:30 a.m., in response to the two phone messages I left early Friday afternoon – as to which Alicia Quebral, Director of Continuing Legal Education, had called me back to say that you were out of the office, but would call me on Monday.

As yet, I have received no call or e-mail from the chair or any member of the bar association’s judicial screening committee reviewing the qualifications of Assemblyman Michael Norris for the Supreme Court judgeship that the Democratic, Republican, and Conservative parties of the 8th Judicial District bestowed upon him, [nearly six weeks ago, by an uncontested cross-endorsement](#).

I again reiterate my request for the names of the chair and members of the Erie County Bar Association’s judicial screening committee and for their rules and procedures for screening judicial candidates – information you declined to give me. If there is a judicial screening questionnaire that is used, I request a copy, in blank. Typically, such questionnaires inquire whether the candidate, to his knowledge, has been the subject of complaints and of lawsuits pertaining to his professional duties.

As discussed, [Assemblyman Norris](#), a member of the Assembly’s Judiciary Committee, Ways and Means Committee, Rules Committee, and Election Law Committee, has corrupted his office to advance himself politically and enrich himself financially – and this is the subject of fully-documented criminal and ethics complaints I filed against him and his fellow legislators – and of lawsuits against them, two of which are LIVE, both encompassing the lawsuit commenced in September 2016, which spanned Assemblyman Norris’ first three years in office. The webpage I created on CJA’s website, www.judgewatch.org, pertaining to Assemblyman Norris and posting my e-mails to him, and which I showed you, is accessible from the prominent homepage link “[ELECTIONS 2004: Cleaning Up NY’s Corrupt & Unconstitutional State Governance – starting with its most important D.A. race: Albany County](#)” – via its link for [Supreme Court and other judicial races](#). The direct link is here: <https://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/elections/2024/norris-michael.htm>.

I expect the judicial screening committee will have many questions for me – and I am available to answer them, including under oath.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
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