

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewidth.org>
Sent: Sunday, June 12, 2022 2:33 PM
To: 'blee@alm.com'
Subject: Thank you & FOLLOW-UP: Lawyer-Comment on CJA's lawsuit vs JCOPE, et al. (#904235-22/Albany County)
Attachments: [6-12-22-ltr-to-independent-review-committee.pdf](#)

Dear Brian,

My above-attached letter of today's date to New York's 15 law school deans – to which you are an indicated recipient – and which I e-mailed to you about two hours ago, simultaneously with my e-mailing it to the deans– now gives you an additional 15 lawyers from whom to get “lawyer comment” for [NYLJ](#) readers.

That being said, [NYLJ](#) readers are mostly lawyers and judges, who are eminently capable of evaluating the lawsuit for themselves, if you give them the [NYSCEF link](#) – and I urge you to do so.

I thank you for being the FIRST to write about the lawsuit – publishing [an article](#) on Friday afternoon on the [NYLJ's](#) website. Although for decades my lawyer parents and then CJA were [NYLJ](#) subscribers, I'm not a subscriber currently and, therefore, could not access your article. Consequently, I don't know if you there furnished the NYSCEF link – or got comment from any of the “JCOPE Must Go” Coalition lawyers, as I had suggested. If you are able to forward me what you wrote, I would greatly appreciate that. Also, when you do get “lawyer comment”, I would appreciate the opportunity to give you my reply.

By the way, I forgot to mention that Erica Vladimer, whose Sexual Harassment Working Group is a [“JCOPE Must Go” Coalition member](#) (& [here](#)) is herself a lawyer.

Tomorrow, I'll be e-mailing a request to the New York State Bar Association, to the New York County Lawyers Association, and, formally, to the New York City Bar Association for their intervention/*amicus curiae* participation in the lawsuit. This will give you yet more lawyers for “lawyer comment” – and I will cc you on that e-mail, as well.

Again, thank you for your initial coverage of the lawsuit – which, as it develops, I hope will convince me to become again a [NYLJ](#) subscriber.

Elena
914-421-1200

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewidth.org>
Sent: Friday, June 10, 2022 12:15 PM
To: 'blee@alm.com' <blee@alm.com>

Subject: corrected NYSCEF link: The "JCOPE Must Go" Coalition lawyers are a PERFECT 1st stop for "lawyer comment" for your NYLJ coverage of CJA's lawsuit vs JCOPE, et al. (#904235-22/Albany County)

Dear Brian,

Thank you for calling – and the generous amount of time you gave to our conversation. This is a MAJOR, MAJOR story.

Below is my self-explanatory yesterday's e-mail to the "JCOPE Must Go" Coalition members – with many lawyers from whom you can get comment on the lawsuit. Among these:

- (1) Evan Davis, Esq. -- former counsel to Governor Mario Cuomo, former president of the NYC Bar Association; and "manager" of what he purports to be the "Committee to Reform the State Constitution";
- (2) Edward Murray, Esq. who chairs the NYC Bar Association's Government Ethics & State Affairs Committee -- &, of course, the NYC Bar Association, with 23,000 lawyers
- (3) Susan Lerner, Esq. – executive director of Common Cause/NYS.

As reflected by [the petition, its exhibits, and my moving affidavit in support of the order to show cause](#) – ALL accessible *via* NYSCEF, the lawsuit is FULLY-DOCUMENTED. What, if anything, do they deny or dispute?

If I do not hear from you over the weekend, I will be in touch on Monday, after I have completed drafting – or perhaps after I have already sent – my e-mail to New York's 15 law school deans who, pursuant to the "ethics commission reform act of 2022", vet the nominations/appointments of the Governor, Legislative Leaders, Attorney General, and Comptroller to the 11-member Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government.

Again, thank you.

Elena
914-421-1200

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 9, 2022 2:43 PM
To: 'edavis@cgsh.com' <edavis@cgsh.com>; 'edmurray3@gmail.com' <edmurray3@gmail.com>; 'mcilenti@nycbar.org' <mcilenti@nycbar.org>; 'akocienda@nycbar.org' <akocienda@nycbar.org>; 'efriedman@nycbar.org' <efriedman@nycbar.org>; 'bhorner@nypirg.org' <bhorner@nypirg.org>; 'jkaehny@reinventalbany.org' <jkaehny@reinventalbany.org>; 'info@reinventalbany.org' <info@reinventalbany.org>; 'laura@lwny.org' <laura@lwny.org>; 'jennifer@lwny.org' <jennifer@lwny.org>; 'slerner@commoncause.org' <slerner@commoncause.org>; 'NYOffice@commoncause.org' <NYOffice@commoncause.org>; 'bweinberg@citizensunion.org' <bweinberg@citizensunion.org>; 'ericavladimer@gmail.com' <ericavladimer@gmail.com>; 'gdreeher@maxwell.syr.edu' <gdreeher@maxwell.syr.edu>

Cc: 'cseiler@timesunion.com' <cseiler@timesunion.com>; 'jjochnowitz@timesunion.com' <jjochnowitz@timesunion.com>; 'cbragg@timesunion.com' <cbragg@timesunion.com>; 'cchurchill@timesunion.com' <cchurchill@timesunion.com>; 'anorder@timesunion.com' <anorder@timesunion.com>; 'ttyler@timesunion.com' <ttyler@timesunion.com>; 'BLyons@TimesUnion.com' <BLyons@TimesUnion.com>; 'rgavin@timesunion.com' <rgavin@timesunion.com>; 'RKarlin@TimesUnion.com' <RKarlin@TimesUnion.com>; 'Joshua.Solomon@TimesUnion.com' <Joshua.Solomon@TimesUnion.com>; 'Edward.Mckinley@timesunion.com' <Edward.Mckinley@timesunion.com>

Subject: NOTICE: Lawsuit vs JCOPE, et al. (#904235-22/Albany County) -- & your ethical & professional responsibilities to the People of the State of NY with respect thereto

TO: "JCOPE Must Go" Coalition Members:

Committee to Reform the State Constitution (a.k.a. Evan Davis, Esq.)
New York City Bar Association/Committee on Ethics & State Affairs
NYPIRG
Reinvent Albany
NYS League of Women Voters
Common Cause-NYS
Citizens Union
Sexual Harassment Working Group
Syracuse University's Campbell Public Affairs Institute,
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs

As of this date, I have received no responses from you to:

- (1) my [May 6, 2022 e-mail to JCOPE](#), to which you were cc'd, entitled "Setting the record straight on Executive Law §94 -- as to JCOPE & CELG -- & taking the emergency correcti[ve] action with respect thereto warranted by CJA's April 13, 2022 complaint (#22-052)" and attaching that [April 13, 2022 complaint](#); and
- (2) my [May 16, 2022 e-mail to the New York State Inspector General \(NYS-IG\)](#), to which you were also cc'd, entitled "(1) Your flagrant violations of your own policy, procedure & Executive Law Art. 4-A pertaining to CJA's Nov. 2, 2021 complaint vs JCOPE, etc; (2) Confirmation that you will have no jurisdiction over CELG, in contrast to JCOPE", attaching my comparably-titled [May 16, 2022 letter to NYS-IG Lang](#).

Why is that? In the interest of the transparency and accountability you purport to stand for, can you explain the reason? And can you explain why, instead of confronting the content of those two e-mails and calling upon JCOPE and NYS-IG Lang to do the same – as was your ethical duty to have done – you instead sent a [June 7, 2022 letter](#) to the appointing authorities of CELG's 11 members, with a cc to "New York State Law School Deans", concealing EVERYTHING those two e-mails alerted you to?

Please be advised that in the absence of responses to my May 6th and May 16th e-mails from JCOPE and NYS-IG Lang – and from you – I was burdened with taking the action that the People of the State of New York would reasonably have supposed you to have taken, on their behalf, namely, suing JCOPE, its

statutory partner-the Legislative Ethics Commission (LEC), and the NYS-IG, as well as the statewide and legislative public officers it has protected, these including the appointing authorities of CELG's 11 members to whom you sent your June 7th letter.

The lawsuit – a combined Article 78 proceeding/declaratory judgment action/citizen-taxpayer action – with accompanying order to show cause – was filed, electronically, at 12:22 am on June 7th, in Albany County, [here](#). What is your response to it? And will you forward it the “New York State Law School Deans” for their evaluation? How about the press, which, for years, has uncritically reported your “ethics” and other touted “good-government” advocacy and adopted same as its own editorial positions. Will you alert the press to the lawsuit, urging its investigative coverage, starting with the [Albany Times Union](#), cc'd with you, on my May 6th and May 16th e-mails, and, prior thereto sent directly my [May 5th e-mail](#), to which you were cc'd. Does it concern you that there was no response to any of these three e-mails from the [Albany Times Union](#) – essentially the only news outlet covering JCOPE, whose reporting and editorializing is then largely copied by New York's other press.

In that regard, on [May 3rd](#) the [Albany Times Union](#) announced that it had won a multitude of awards in the New York Press Association's Better Newspaper Contest, followed, on [May 5th](#), with announcement that the New York Press Club had recognized it by the “Gabe Pressman Truth to Power Award” for its “refusal to bow to pressure from the very top of state government while diligently reporting accurate, unfiltered information to its readers”. It picked up that latter award on [June 7th](#) – the same day as CJA's lawsuit against JCOPE, et al. was filed and as you sent your letter about CELG appointments.

So there is NO doubt as to what, at this juncture, I consider your ethical and professional responsibilities to be, I herewith expressly invite you to intervene in the lawsuit, either individually or collectively. This includes for respondents/defendants, should you deem the facts and law to be with them, and not the petitioners/plaintiffs.

Suffice to add that inasmuch as the institutional petitioner/plaintiff Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) does not yet have counsel representing it, I also request your assistance in locating counsel for CJA for what is plainly a landmark ethics-enforcing, corruption-eradicating lawsuit. In view of your multitudinous connections and the [23,000-plus membership of the New York City Bar Association](#), which additionally runs a [lawyer-referral service](#), that should not be difficult.

Please advise – and as soon as possible – as oral argument on the TRO sought by petitioners/plaintiffs' order to show cause is scheduled for next Friday, June 17th at 2 pm in Albany Supreme Court. Below is the formal notice I gave thereof to the respondents/defendants.

The [Albany Times Union](#) is here the first of New York's press to be alerted to the lawsuit and next week's oral argument – and certainly should be asking your opinions and inquiring of your intentions with respect thereto.

Thank you.

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

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 9, 2022 11:35 AM
To: 'jcope@jcope.ny.gov' <jcope@jcope.ny.gov>; 'Emily.Logue@jcope.ny.gov' <Emily.Logue@jcope.ny.gov>; 'jose.nieveslaw@gmail.com' <jose.nieveslaw@gmail.com>; 'glavine@bhlawpllc.com' <glavine@bhlawpllc.com>; 'sgerstman@magavern.com' <sgerstman@magavern.com>; 'marvin.jacob@retired.weil.com' <marvin.jacob@retired.weil.com>; 'dmcnamara@phillipslytle.com' <dmcnamara@phillipslytle.com>; 'lreid@nysenate.gov' <lreid@nysenate.gov>; 'inspector.general@ig.ny.gov' <inspector.general@ig.ny.gov>; 'INTAKEUNIT' <emailreply@ig.ny.gov>; 'records.access@exec.ny.gov' <records.access@exec.ny.gov>; 'josephj@nysenate.gov' <josephj@nysenate.gov>; 'haakb@nyassembly.gov' <haakb@nyassembly.gov>; 'NYAG.Pressoffice@ag.ny.gov' <NYAG.Pressoffice@ag.ny.gov>; 'andy.aujla@ag.ny.gov' <andy.aujla@ag.ny.gov>; 'mkogut@osc.ny.gov' <mkogut@osc.ny.gov>
Cc: 'shetman@nycourts.gov' <shetman@nycourts.gov>

Subject: June 17, 2022 oral argument on TRO -- CJA, et al. v. JCOPE, et al. (#904235-22/Albany County)

TO: **New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE) –**
ATT: Sanford Berland/Executive Director
Emily Logue/Director of Investigations & Enforcement
Chair Jose Nieves
Commissioners: Gary Lavine, Sharon Gerstman,
Marvin Jacob, David McNamara
Legislative Ethics Commission (LEC) – ATT: Lisa Reid/Executive Director
New York State Inspector General (NYS-IG) – ATT: Lucy Lang/NYS-IG
Governor Kathy Hochul – ATT: [FOIL officer](#)
Temporary Senate President Andrea Stewart-Cousins & Senate –
ATT: Jellisa Joseph/Counsel to Secretary of the Senate
Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie & Assembly – ATT: Brian Haak/Counsel
Attorney General Letitia James – ATT: [AG-press](#); [Westchester Bureau Chief Andy Aujla](#)
Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli – ATT: Mike Kogut/Associate Counsel

This follows my phone and e-mail communications with you and/or your offices on Tuesday, Wednesday, and today concerning the lawsuit against you, *Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc., et al. v. New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics, et al.*, filed in Albany County (#904235-22).

Next Friday, June 17th, at 2 p.m., oral argument will be had, in Albany County Supreme Court at 16 Eagle Street, before Justice Peter Lynch, on petitioners/plaintiffs' request for a TRO to stay the "ethics commission reform act of 2022" – Part QQ of Education, Labor, Housing, and Family Assistance Budget Bill #S.8006-C/A.9006-C – from taking effect on July 8, 2022 and to enjoin JCOPE from closing, pending final determination of the lawsuit's June 6, 2022 verified petition/complaint and its accompanying order to show cause. At issue is the sixth cause of action (¶¶78-85) that Part QQ was enacted unconstitutionally, unlawfully, and by fraud.

On June 17th, I will serve you with hard copies of the papers. In the meantime, you will not be hampered in the slightest in preparing, **fully**, for the oral argument, as all the papers are available electronically, *via*

NYSCEF (New York State Courts Electronic Filing). The direct link to the electronic docket of the case is [here](#). You can also access the verified petition/complaint, the order to show cause, and my accompanying affidavit from CJA's website, www.judgewatch.org – and the direct link is [here](#). Indeed, accessing the case via NYSCEF and CJA's website will enable you to access the scores, if not hundreds, of substantiating links petitioners/plaintiffs' papers contain, not accessible from the hard copies.

So that I might be guided accordingly in the number of copies to reproduce – a not inconsiderable expense – please advise if you will waive service of the hard copies, as superfluous.

Justice Lynch's principal law clerk, Stehle Hetman-Mika, is herewith cc'd, as discussed with her.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, individual petitioner/plaintiff *pro se*
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