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GOVERNOR NOMINATES SENATOR LACK TO SERVE ON COURT OF CLAIMS

Highly Qualified, Experienced Attorney Nominated to Serve on the Court in Long Island

Governor George E. Pataki today nominated Senator James J. Lack as a Judge of the Court of Claims. The State Judicial Screening Committee found him highly qualified to serve as a Judge of the Court of Claims based on his intellect, judgment, temperament, character and experience. The appointment is subject to Senate confirmation.

"Jim Lack is uniquely qualified to serve on our Court of Claims by virtue of his extraordinary intellect, voluminous knowledge of the law and his more than two decades of service as a member of the Senate, including his superb stewardship as Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and his wealth of experience for thirty years in the private practice of law," Governor Pataki said. "I am pleased that this highly gifted and dedicated legislator will continue to serve the people of New York and I am confident he will continue to do so with great distinction as a member of the judiciary."

Senate Majority Leader Joseph L. Bruno said, "New York State is fortunate to have a man of Jim Lack's character and intellect serve on the Court of Claims. Jim has worked diligently representing the people of Suffolk County as a member of the State Senate for more than twenty years, and has been an exemplary Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee for the last nine. While his extraordinary knowledge and experience will be sorely missed among his colleagues, it is the people of New York that will benefit greatly from his intense dedication, his integrity and his knowledge of and respect for the law."

Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman said, "I can think of no other more qualified candidate than Senator James Lack for appointment to the bench. As Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee for the last nine years, Senator Lack has been a stalwart champion of the courts, and he is held in the highest regard by those of us in the judiciary who have had the privilege of working with him. His encyclopedic knowledge of the courts and his keen understanding of the role of judges in our system of government make him uniquely suited to this new challenge in his career. I welcome him to the judiciary and look forward to working with him in the years ahead."

Senator Lack was nominated to fill a vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Leonard Silverman, and is for a term expiring on March 22, 2003.

Senator Lack, who will hear civil cases on Long Island, has served in the New York State Senate since 1979, and as Chair of the of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary since 1994. Since 1982, he has been engaged in the private practice of law as a partner in the firm of Smyth & Lack in Huntington. From 1977 until 1978, he was president of the Better Business Bureau of Metropolitan New York. From 1974 until 1977, he served as Commissioner of the Suffolk County Consumer Affairs Department. From 1972 until 1974, he served as a Suffolk County Principal Assistant District Attorney. From 1970 until 1972, he served as Counsel to the New York State Consumer Protection

Board.

Senator Lack served in the New York Army National Guard from 1969 until 1972, the New York Air National Guard from 1972 until 1974 and received an honorable discharge. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1966 and his law degree from Fordham University School of Law in 1969. ###

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