

Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewidth.org>
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 9:23 AM
To: 'nyscompensation@gmail.com'
Cc: 'lmarks@nycourts.gov'; 'jshukin@nycourts.gov'; 'skerby@nycourts.gov'
Subject: Protecting the Commission from FRAUD -- CJA's Second Supplemental Submission in Specific Rebuttal to Chief Administrative Judge Marks' Nov. 22, 2019 Supplemental Submission

Attachments: record-2-20-13-foil-compressed.pdf; record-12-9-15-foil-compressed.pdf; record-12-9-16-foil-compressed.pdf; record-10-7-19-foil-compressed.pdf; 2nd-cause-of-action-compressed.pdf; 2-19-19-questions-for-marks-10pp-compressed.pdf

TO: Commission on Legislative, Judicial & Executive Compensation

Following up my below December 9, 2019 e-mail to you, identifying that “the reason Chief Administrative Judge Marks is able to propose that the Judiciary will self-fund COLAs from its own budget is because the Judiciary budget is a larcenous SLUSH-FUND, born of constitutional violations, statutory-violations, and fraud”, please deem that December 9th e-mail and this to be my second supplemental submission, in specific response to Chief Administrative Judge Marks’ November 22, 2019 supplemental submission. There, he makes the extraordinary statement:

“...since inception of the Salary Commission system in 2011, the Judiciary has consistently absorbed the costs of *all* judicial pay adjustments recommended by a Commission without asking for any additional funding to pay those costs. We did this even during the years for which prior Commissions were making salary recommendations when, because those recommendations were geared to help State judges catch up after a 13-year pay freeze, the cost of the increase, and therefore the impact of the Judiciary budget, was far greater. Those adjustments were much larger than even the largest salary adjustment that we might today imagine the Federal Judiciary will receive over the next several years. For example, during the 2012-2015 salary cycle, State Supreme Court Justices received a 17% pay increase for the 2012-13 fiscal year (with other State Judges receiving proportionate increases); a 4.3% increase for the 2013-14 fiscal year; and a 4.2% increase for the 2014-15 fiscal year. During the first fiscal year of the 2016-2019 salary cycle, the Justices received an 11% increase; and in 2018-19, another 6.7%.

We promised the prior commissions the Judiciary budget would absorb the costs of all of these increases without asking for additional funding and then proceeded to live up to that commitment, notwithstanding their size and the fiscal burden they presented...” (italics in the original).

As Chief Administrative Judge Marks’ scant 1-1/2 page supplemental submission identifies not a single dollar amount, the Commission must demand that he specify the dollar amounts he is claiming the Judiciary self-funded from its budget, arising from the August 29, 2011 report of the Commission on Judicial Compensation and the December 24, 2015 report of the Commission on Legislative, Judicial and Executive Compensation. Upon information and belief, the Judiciary only absorbed the first year of each COLA or judicial pay raise increase – and did this to avoid having to identify their dollar amounts, or even their existence, in its proposed “single-budget” bills – and the Legislature’s right to modify or strike them out.

In his original submission (at p. 21), Chief Administrative Judge Marks’ purports that the Judiciary’s proposed “series of four...cost-of-living adjustments for New York’s state-paid judges over the four fiscal years beginning April 1, 2020” is “very modest”, that “The cost of these adjustments in each fiscal year, and the aggregate cost over the full four years is almost certain to be de minimus” and in dollar terms would “cost the State \$13.9 million, or an average of \$3.46 million annually” . This is false. The \$3.46 million cost of each COLA increase, essentially repeated by Chief Administrative

Judge Marks in testifying on November 4th (at pp. 7, 12), becomes, after the initial year, embedded as increased judicial salaries, COMPOUNDING yearly. Thus, while the first COLA, in fiscal year 2020-21, would cost \$3.46 million in that first year, the second COLA, in fiscal year 2021-22, is another \$3.46 million, plus the original COLA of \$3.46 million, now shifted to a permanent increase in judicial salary costs – for a total of \$6.92 million in the second year. The third COLA, in fiscal year 2022-23, is a further \$3.46 million, plus \$6.92 million from the two prior COLAs, now shifted to increased judicial salary costs – bringing the total to \$10.38 million in the third year. The fourth COLA, in fiscal year 2023-24, is another \$3.45 million, plus \$10.38 million from the three prior COLAs, now shifted to increased judicial salary costs – thereby totaling \$13.84 million in the fourth year. The dollar total for these four years of COMPOUNDING judicial salary increases originating as COLAs is the addition of \$3.46 million for the first year, \$6.92 million for the second year, \$10.38 million for the third year, and \$13.84 million for the fourth year, which is \$34.56 million. And it does not end there, as this \$34.56 million is then forever a recurring yearly cost upon the state for judicial salaries – on top of which the state must pay out for the increased costs of salary-based non-salary compensation benefits, such as pensions. Does Chief Administrative Judge Marks deny this? Is this why he has submitted no sworn statements of projected costs – or past costs – including from the Judiciary’s own budget director?

As I stated in testifying on November 4th, I believe that what the state has already paid out in commission-based judicial salary increases is now “on the order of half a billion dollars” (Tr. 70). Getting more precise figures must be a Commission priority, especially as the Judiciary has withheld relevant costs in its SLUSH FUND budgets and in responding to FOIL/records requests. My attached February 20, 2013, December 9, 2015, and December 9, 2016 FOIL/records requests – and the Judiciary’s responses thereto – are illustrative.

Finally, over and beyond my sworn testimony and the EVIDENCE from the record of the *CJA v. Cuomo...DiFiore* citizen-taxpayer action that I handed up to the Commissioners pertaining to the Judiciary budget is the further EVIDENCE I had brought with me to the November 4th hearing, but inadvertently forgot to hand up, *to wit*, my October 7, 2019 FOIL/records request to the Judiciary for its “independent audits” pursuant to Judiciary Law §249-c” – encompassing my comparable November 28, 2016 FOIL/records request, to which the Judiciary had made no responsive production. It is attached, as are my follow-up November 29, 2019 and December 5, 2019 e-mails, reflecting the Judiciary’s failure, yet again, to even respond. There are only three possibilities: either the Judiciary cannot make production because it has NOT complied with its “independent audit” obligations; or because production would reveal that its “independent audits” are sham; or because its “independent audits” have yielded results not favorable to the Judiciary. Each of these possibilities should be concerning to the Commission – and the Commission’s duty, based on Chief Administrative Judge Marks’ claims about the Judiciary’s budget, is to verify the situation by obtaining from him the records those October 7, 2019 and November 28, 2016 FOIL/records request seek – and by subpoena, if necessary.

Needless to say, costs to the state of prospective COLA increases are ALL irrelevant because – as demonstrated by the record of the *CJA v. Cuomo...DiFiore* citizen-taxpayer action – the Judiciary is systemically corrupt on adjudicative, administrative, and financial levels, making any judicial salary increases, by COLA or otherwise, unconstitutional. Indeed, the record of the lawsuit reveals NO adjudication of the constitutional issue presented by both the sixth cause of action (¶64) and seventh cause of action (¶74) of CJA’s September 2, 2016 verified complaint that corruption is an “appropriate factor” that the Commission must “take into account” for Chapter 60, Part E, of the Laws of 2015 to be constitutional.

Later in the day, I will furnish you a pdf of this e-mail, combined with its attachments, to facilitate your posting this second supplemental submission on your webpage for submission: <http://www.nyscommissiononcompensation.org/Submissions-judicial.shtml>. Meantime, I am furnishing it to Chief Administrative Judge Marks, Chief Judge DiFiore, and the Judiciary’s records access officer for response.

Thank you.

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

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2019 8:04 AM
To: 'nyscompensation@gmail.com' <nyscompensation@gmail.com>
Cc: 'lmarks@nycourts.gov' <lmarks@nycourts.gov>; 'jshukin@nycourts.gov' <jshukin@nycourts.gov>;
'skerby@nycourts.gov' <skerby@nycourts.gov>
Subject: (Corrected) Status & Posting -- CJA's Nov. 26, 2019 e-mail to the Commissioners, with attached Nov. 25, 2019 letter to Chief Administrative Judge Marks

TO: Commission on Legislative, Judicial & Executive Compensation

My yesterday's e-mail, which is below, contained two errors, now corrected:

- (1) Its title misdated the year of my letter to Chief Administrative Judge Marks. The date of the letter is November 25, **2019**, not 2015;
- (2) Its message identified only Commissioners Eng and Lachman as having been given, *in hand*, the particularized EVIDENCE that the Judiciary budget is a "SLUSH FUND" – omitting **Commissioner Hormozi**, to whom I also gave a copy of that same EVIDENCE, *in hand*.

Please furnish this corrected e-mail to all seven Commission members – and post my November 25, 2019 letter to Chief Administrative Judge Marks, transmitted to the Commission by my November 26, 2019 e-mail to it, as my "First Supplemental Submission in Further Support of Testimony". To assist you in posting it as such, the above-attached first pdf contains both the 3-page November 26, 2019 e-mail and the 7-page letter.

Thank you.

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

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Monday, December 9, 2019 3:56 PM
To: 'nyscompensation@gmail.com' <nyscompensation@gmail.com>
Cc: 'lmarks@nycourts.gov' <lmarks@nycourts.gov>; 'jshukin@nycourts.gov' <jshukin@nycourts.gov>;
'skerby@nycourts.gov' <skerby@nycourts.gov>
Subject: Status & Posting -- CJA's Nov. 26, 2019 e-mail to the Commissioners, with attached Nov. 25, 2019 letter to Chief Administrative Judge Marks

TO: Commission on Legislative, Judicial & Executive Compensation

Please confirm that my below November 26, 2019 e-mail entitled "Protecting the Commission on Legislative, Judicial and Executive Compensation from FRAUD", with its now signed above-attached November 25, 2019 letter to Chief Administrative Judge Marks, was forwarded to "each of the Commission's seven members", as requested – AND that it will be posted on the Commission's webpage of submissions:

<http://www.nyscommissiononcompensation.org/Submissions-judicial.shtml>.