



News Release

Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie

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Statement from Speaker Carl Heastie Regarding Commission on Compensation

Last year, the Assembly, Senate and Governor formed the Commission on Legislative, Judicial, & Executive Compensation in order to remove politics from the decision making process in determining appropriate salary structures in our government. The idea behind the commission was to determine administrative, legislative and statewide elected salaries devoid of any political considerations or agendas. Additionally, considering that there has not been a raise in 18 years, we tasked the Commission with objectively looking at economic factors in determining a pay increase, not by how many affected individuals testified nor by the testimony of those who are campaigning for office who would seek to politicize this issue.

I have long stated that a pay increase is warranted considering that the vast majority of public servants are hardworking and dedicated, and a pay increase will help us to attract and retain quality individuals.

Unfortunately, counter to the purpose of the Commission, there are some who have tried to politicize this process by suggesting legislators testify or trade legislation for a pay increase. Last year, when judicial salaries were being considered, the decision to raise compensation was based primarily on economic factors and not by the testimony of judges or the number of judges who were represented during testimony. We should hold the Commission to that same standard in considering raises for statewide elected officials, commissioners, and legislators.

It is also important to note that a similar commission was set up to look at compensation levels for New York City Council members and was not subject to additional considerations after the fact or horse trading for legislation.

We should demand the same.

Given the recent investigations, it is understandable that there have been calls for stronger ethics laws in our state, but the issue of a pay increase should stand on its own merit and not be traded for any legislation. In the Assembly, our door is always open to reforming government to be more open and transparent in order to restore faith to the people of New York. The work we do in the State Legislature is important - we have secured on time budgets, increased resources to education, helped low and middle income families climb the ladder of economic opportunity, and we are making the investments that are necessary to grow our economy. Additionally, we provide a vast array of constituent services

Let the Commission complete its work without further injecting politics into the process. It's high time that we do the right thing by these hard working men and women who dedicate their lives to public service and

pay them appropriately.

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