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BY E-MAIL

October 21, 2015

TO: JCOPE/LEC Review Commission

FROM: Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

RE: Bringing the Commission's Website Out of Hiding

In testifying at the Commission's October 14, 2015 public hearing, I stated:

"...your website, which you apparently threw up at some point in the summer, it's not clear, is actually hidden. You can't find it. Okay. It's not under JCOPE/LEC Review Commission. You have to know that it's New York Ethics [Review] Commission. You renamed yourself. You put up a website that cannot be found. I only found it, well, in a way, at the last minute, with difficulty. But it's hidden."
(video, at 53:58 mins).

Apart from the fact that you issued NO press releases, including announcing that you were naming yourself "New York Ethics Review Commission" or that your website would be www.nyethicsreview.org, **your website cannot be found because it has a setting that impedes Google and other searches.**

A Google search for "JCOPE Review Commission" or for "JCOPE/LEC Review Commission" does not furnish your website. Indeed, it requires a Google search for "New York Ethics Review Commission" to furnish the site, though not at the top of the list – and it reads:

"New York Ethics Review Commission
www.nyethicsreview.org/
A description for this result is not available because of this site's robots.txt – learn more."

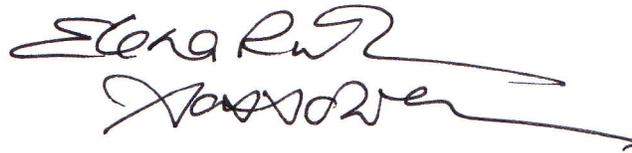
The link for learning more about robots.txt is here:

<https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/6062608?hl=en&rd=1> .

Was this robots.txt setting intended – or was it the result of inadvertence or ignorance? Unless you intend to continue to withhold the Commission’s website from the public, you must IMMEDIATELY remove/alter the robot.txt so that search engines can index it so that it can be easily found through Google and other search engines.

Needless to say, you should also explain why a funding-starved government-established commission, which is not an organization, would pay for a .org website. Apparently you registered it on July 22, 2015¹. Could you not have availed yourself of a presumably free-of-charge New York government-suffixed website (**ny.gov**; **ny.us.gov**, etc.)? Or would a government-suffixed website not have been as easy to hide?

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven R. W. Ross". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

¹ Info obtained from:

<http://whois.domaintools.com/nyethicsreview.org>; <http://domain-kb.com/www/nyethicsreview.org>