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## Judicial Salaries



Victor A. Kovner, Modern Courts' Board Chair (second from left) joins Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman (left), Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Manhattan District Attorney (and former Board member) Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., New York State Bar President Stephen Younger and Assembly Judiciary Chair Helene Weinstein as Governor David Paterson signs into law the Judicial Compensation Bill on December 10, 2010.

### Statement of Victor A. Kovner, Chair of the Fund for Modern Courts, on passage of the judicial compensation commission bill

"We congratulate Governor Paterson for placing the judicial compensation commission bill on the special legislative session agenda, and the members of the State Senate and Assembly for their overwhelming approval of that legislation.

Modern Courts has long advocated the creation of a Quadrennial Commission which will once and for all remove judicial compensation from the political process.

This Commission provides a rational solution to the problem of how to achieve equity, regularity, and objectivity in judicial compensation, and will preserve our independent, highly-qualified and diverse judiciary."

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Earlier Statement:

February 2010 Statement by Victor A. Kovner, on Court of Appeals decision in *Chief Judge v. Governor* and legislative leadership reaction:

### MODERN COURTS WELCOMES THE DECISION OF THE COURT OF APPEALS IN CHIEF JUDGE v. GOVERNOR

New York, NY. Modern Courts applauds the Court's holding in *Chief Judge v. Governor* that the failure to modify judicial compensation was unconstitutional but regrets the disappointing reaction from the State Legislature.

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### SPEECH

[Speech on the Independence of the Judiciary and Judicial Pay Raises in New York.](#)[Victor A. Kovner, Chair of Modern Courts](#)

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[Statement by Victor A. Kovner, Chair of the Committee for Modern Courts on Judicial Salaries](#)

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### TESTIMONY 2011

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Mr. Kovner said, "Today's decision gives New Yorkers the expectation that judges in the State of New York will at long last receive just compensation. As the Court of Appeals stated, 'When this Court articulates the constitutional standards governing state action, we presume that the State will act accordingly.' Now is the time for the Legislature to create a Quadrennial Commission to ensure that judicial compensation is determined on the merits, and no longer linked to legislative compensation."

Mr. Kovner added, "We are, however, particularly disappointed by the Assembly's announced intention to defer consideration until 'economic conditions improve.' This statement effectively defies the decision of the Court of Appeals, which concluded 'We therefore expect appropriate and expeditious legislative consideration.' A Quadrennial Commission is the perfect solution. It is an objective mechanism with appointees from all three branches of government and offers the best prospect for achieving equity, regularity, and objectivity in judicial compensation. After eleven years of promises, further delay would be outrageous."

Mr. Kovner congratulated the diligent work of the distinguished counsel who commenced the actions to preserve an independent judiciary. Mr. Kovner further thanked Modern Courts' former Board member, Caitlin Halligan, and former partner at Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP, and her colleagues, Gregory Silbert and David Yolcut, at the firm for preparing an amicus brief on behalf of Modern Courts.

The Fund for Modern Courts continues its supports for increasing judicial compensation for New York State judges. Modern Courts vigorously advocates for the judiciary proposal to create an objective mechanism which would separate judicial compensation from legislative compensation.

## More on this topic

[Law Day Speech on the Independence of the Judiciary and Judicial Pay Raises in New York by Victor A. Kovner, Chair of Modern Courts](#)



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© 2012 The Fund for Modern Courts  
28 West 39th Street, New York, NY 10018  
Tel.: 212.541.6741  
Fax: 212.541.7301  
[justice@moderncourts.org](mailto:justice@moderncourts.org)