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## State's top judges finally get a raise

A state commission voted to increase the state's Supreme Court judges' salaries by 27% over the next three years. Some industry supporters say it's too little, too late.

By [Shane Dixon Kavanaugh](#)

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New York's Supreme Court judges will get their first pay raise in more than a decade, but the increase is too slight to please some leaders in the legal profession.

While the state's Commission on Judicial Compensation voted Friday to boost the salaries of its trial judges 27% over the next three years, the New York State Bar Association called the raise inadequate and said it would not guarantee that the state will retain its legal talent.

"We recognize the state's fiscal problems and that many New Yorkers have been forced to sacrifice," said Vincent Doyle, president of the state bar association. "For judges, the sacrifice has been particularly long and onerous."

Salaries for New York's judges have been frozen at \$136,700 since 1999. The commission voted to raise their pay to \$160,000 next year and to \$167,000 in 2013. In 2014, annual pay will bump up to \$174,000.

The state bar association had wanted to see judicial compensation rise to \$192,000, which it said would have reflected the cost-of-living increases since 1999. It has long criticized the ongoing salary freeze as a leading factor for judges fleeing the bench in New York.

Forty-eight of the state's 1,300 judges resigned in 1999, according to a recent report by *The New York Times*. In 2011, 110, or nearly 10%, quit the bench.

"We hope these increases are enough to reverse the trend of judges leaving and qualified people not pursuing these positions," Mr. Doyle said. "But only time will tell. One questions whether it will."

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