Democrat and Chronicle

Bar Association likes proposal for judicial salary commission

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The state Bar Association is urging lawmakers to pass legislation Monday to create a judicial compensation commission. Gov. David Paterson included a bill that would do this on his agenda for Monday afternoon's special session.

State Bar Association President Stephen P. Younger wrote a letter to Paterson today (and cc'd all members of the Legislature), commending him for including the issue on the agenda. Judges deserve fair compensation for the work they do, and a number of them have left the bench because the salary is not competitive. Young wrote. The last time the judiary received a pay raise in New York was in 1999.

This is what Young said in a statement today:

"New York's judges are central to a fair and just system of government. Their salaries should reflect the value that society places on their work. They deserve fair compensation for the work they do — unfortunately, they are not receiving it. New York State's judicial salaries were last adjusted in 1999, more than a decade ago. They are receiving less than their federal counterparts, less than their counterparts in comparable states and, indeed, less than first year associates of large city law firms. As a result, we are seeing highly regarded judges leave the bench because of the lack of adequate compensation."

The governor has proposed creating a commission to evaluate and adjust judicial salaries.

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