

New York Law Journal

ALM Properties, Inc.

Page printed from: *New York Law Journal*

[Back to Article](#)

Judge Resigns Second Department Over Wages

Daniel Wise

New York Law Journal

09-20-2011

Justice Joseph Covello of the Appellate Division, Second Department, who resigned last week, expressed disappointment yesterday that the pay raise approved by a special commission last month "isn't a ton of money," especially since the state's 1,300 judges have only received one raise in the last 20 years.

Justice Covello called his decision to leave the bench to join an eight-lawyer litigation firm in Mineola "incredibly bittersweet," but "clearly an economic one." With his arrival, the firm has been changed to Lynn, Gartner, Dunne & Covello.

Justice Covello is the third Appellate Division judge to cite the pay drought as what drove him from the bench. The others are Robert Spolzino in the Second Department ([NYLJ, Aug. 4, 2009](#)) and James M. McGuire in the First Department ([NYLJ, Nov. 15, 2010](#)).

The commission created by statute to end the stalemate over raises for the state judges approved an increase in the salary of Appellate Division justices from the current \$139,700 to \$168,600 next April, to \$176,000 in 2013 and to \$183,300 in 2014. Those raises will take effect automatically unless the Legislature and the governor object.

Justice Covello was elected to Nassau District Court in 1995 and to Supreme Court in 2000. He was appointed to the Second Department bench in 2005.

Copyright 2011. ALM Media Properties, LLC. All rights reserved.