

## Center for Judicial Accountability

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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability <elena@judgewatch.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 22, 2015 7:59 PM  
**To:** 'cseiler@timesunion.com'; 'jspector@gannett.com'; 'joelstashenko@aol.com';  
'hviccaro@dailygazette.net'; 'jvielkind@capitalnewyork.com'; 'mike.vilensky@wsj.com';  
'mvirtanen@ap.org'; 'swaldman@capitalnewyork.com'; 'tweaver@syracuse.com';  
'gutbrodt@senate.state.ny.us'  
**Subject:** Psst! What's Happening with the JCOPE/LEC Review Commission, Appointed Nearly 2 Months Ago?

### News Lead –

#### **Psst! What's Happening with the JCOPE/LEC Review Commission, Appointed Nearly 2 Months Ago?**

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the Governor, Temporary Senate President, and Assembly Speaker jointly appointed an eight-person commission to review and evaluate JCOPE (Joint Commission on Public Ethics) & the LEC (Legislative Ethics Commission).

What's been happening since? Who did the Governor, Temporary Senate President, and Assembly Speaker jointly designate as its chair and what is its methodology? How to contact it? The review commission does not seem to have a phone number, an e-mail address, an office, any staff. Will it be holding public hearings at which members of the public who have filed ethics complaints with JCOPE and LEC can testify as to the direct, first-hand experience? Or will it be taking testimony in private? Is it going to be doing outreach – or must members of the public reach out to it?

As the eight commissioners have relationships and associations with those who appointed them and who are the subject of complaints filed with JCOPE and LEC, etc. what is its protocol for dealing with conflict of interest?

These are questions that our non-partisan, nonprofit citizens' organization, Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA), asked in a June 18<sup>th</sup> letter to the JCOPE/LEC review commission – which today we sent to JCOPE, LEC, and other public officers, from the Governor on-down and including U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara who, more than a year ago, reportedly subpoenaed all complaints filed with JCOPE.

These two letters and the documentary evidence substantiating them are posted on our website, [www.judgewatch.org](http://www.judgewatch.org), accessible *via* the prominent homepage link “Exposing the Fraud of the Commission to Investigate Public Corruption”. It leads to a link entitled “Going Where the Commission to Investigate Public Corruption Did NOT:...JCOPE”. Here's the direct link to its menu page: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/searching-nys/commission-to-investigate-public-corruption/holding-to-account/exposing-JCOPE.htm>

I am available to answer questions and to be interviewed.

Elena Sassower, Director  
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)  
914-421-1200  
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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability <elena@judgewatch.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 22, 2015 6:37 PM  
**To:** 'susan\_arbetter@wcny.org'; 'jbakeman@capitalnewyork.com';  
'liz.benjamin@twcnews.com'; 'gblain@nydailynews.com'; 'cbragg@timesunion.com';  
'wbrunelle@capitalnewyork.com'; 'jcampbell1@gannett.com'; 'dan.clark@twcnews.com';  
'kconley@nypost.com'; 'acutler@wten.com'; 'kdewitt@wxxi.org'  
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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability <elena@judgewatch.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 22, 2015 7:51 PM  
**To:** 'dklepper@ap.org'; 'fklopott@bloomberg.net'; 'blambdin@wnyt.com';  
'jlentz@cityandstateny.com'; 'klnynews@aol.com'; 'Erica.Order@wsj.com';  
'Alyssa\_Plock@wcny.org'; 'tprecious@buffnews.com'; 'nick.reisman@twcnews.com';  
'drobinson@bizjournals.com'; 'yancey.roy@newsday.com'; 'mryan@wmht.org'  
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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability <elena@judgewatch.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 22, 2015 6:44 PM  
**To:** 'fud31@aol.com'; 'zack.fink@ny1news.com'; 'efmnews@aol.com';  
'news@cbs6albany.com'; 'michael.gormley@newsday.com';  
'mhamilton@timesunion.com'; 'whammond@nydailynews.com'; 'khughes@nysnys.com';  
'ahupfl@cityandstateny.com'; 'rkarlin@timesunion.com'; 'ckatz@nydailynews.com';  
'info@gothamgazette.com'; 'dking@gothamgazette.com'  
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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability <elena@judgewatch.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 22, 2015 8:04 PM  
**To:** 'susanne.craig@nytimes.com'; kaplan@nytimes.com; rashbaum@nytimes.com; 'metro@nytimes.com'; 'editorial@nytimes.com'  
**Subject:** Psst! What's Happening with the JCOPE/LEC Review Commission, Appointed Nearly 2 Months Ago?

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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability <elena@judgewatch.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 15, 2015 5:46 PM  
**To:** 'Cezary Podkul'  
**Subject:** A Goldmine of "Story Ideas"

Dear Cezary:

Thank you for your e-mail outreach. As discussed, our nonpartisan, nonprofit citizens' organization has a goldmine of "story ideas" for investigative coverage -- beginning with the Commission on Judicial Compensation, which has now morphed into the Commission on Legislative, Judicial, & Executive Compensation. The story of the Commission on Judicial Compensation is a story of brazen corruption at the highest levels of all three government branches, involving hundreds of millions, and ultimately billions, of taxpayer dollars -- a story demonstrating that there is NO "New York government accountability" of any significance, including *via* U.S. Attorney Bharara, whose much heralded indictments, including of former Assembly Speaker Silver and former Temporary Senate President Skelos, are simply window dressing.

This story -- and the evidentiary proof substantiating it -- are readily accessible from the three litigations featured on CJA's homepage, [www.judgewatch.org](http://www.judgewatch.org), by the link entitled: "What's Taking You So Long, Preet?: CJA's Three Litigations whose Records are Perfect "Paper Trails" for Indicting New York's Highest Public Officers for Corruption". Here's the direct link to its menu page: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/searching-nys/commission-to-investigate-public-corruption/holding-to-account/3-litigations-papertrails.htm>. I recommend you read CJA's verified complaint for all three litigations, as they each furnish a comprehensive, yet easy-to-read, narrative overview.

Of course, you might find it more manageable and efficient to begin by reading just two letters -- and these pertain to the Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE) and the review commission established on May 1<sup>st</sup> that is supposed to be examining it and the Legislative Ethics Commission (LEC). For your convenience, I have now posted these two letters, dated June 18, 2015 and June 22, 2015, on the above menu page of the three litigations. The News Alert I sent out about the letters some weeks ago -- to which there was NO response from any media -- is below, slightly updated.

### **Psst! What's Happening with the JCOPE/LEC Review Commission, Appointed More Than 2 Months Ago?**

On May 1st, the Governor, Temporary Senate President, and Assembly Speaker jointly appointed an eight-person commission to review and evaluate JCOPE (Joint Commission on Public Ethics) & the LEC (Legislative Ethics Commission).

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**From:** Cezary Podkul [mailto:Cezary.Podkul@propublica.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 15, 2015 1:28 PM  
**To:** elena@judgewatch.org  
**Subject:** Story Ideas?

Hi Elena,

This is Cezary from ProPublica. I cover New York government accountability here at ProPublica. I came across your website, and some of your efforts to bring accountability to judicial compensation in the state. I am looking for stories ideas in this area and wanted to reach out to you and see if you had any suggestions on items worth following-up on or looking into? If so, please let me know when would be a good time to chat.

I can be reached at 917 512 0218.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Best,

Cezary

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Cezary Podkul  
Reporter | ProPublica  
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## Center for Judicial Accountability

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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability <elena@judgewatch.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 30, 2015 12:25 PM  
**To:** 'sfoss@dailygazette.net'  
**Subject:** STOPPING the "Wheels in motion for lawmakers' pay raise" -- your 6/22/15 Daily Gazette column/blog

Dear Ms. Foss,

Following up on you excellent column/blog "*Wheels in motion for lawmakers' pay raise*" – and the voice mail message I left for you earlier today –the legislative pay raises you descry are NOT a *fait accompli*. They can be stopped, as likewise the pay raises for executive and judicial branch officers. All it takes is investigative reporting of what's been happening on the pay raise issue –which, to date, the press has not only NOT reported, but actively concealed.

The pay raise issue – and the unlawfulness and unconstitutionality of the gimmick of a pay raise commission whose recommendations take effect, automatically, absent legislative or executive override, has been the subject of massive advocacy by our non-partisan, non-profit citizens' organization, Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA), for the past FOUR YEARS. This advocacy has included public testimony – on February 6, 2013 before the Legislature as part of its budget hearings and on September 17, 2013 before the Commission to Investigate Public Corruption – as well as a mountain of complaints to our highest public officers and to such criminal and ethics authorities as US Attorney Preet Bharara and JCOPE – and three separate lawsuits.

The below press-release about the JCOPE/LEC review commission, e-mailed last week to all listed members of New York's Legislative Correspondents' Association (<http://lcapressroom.com/>) – without the slightest report -- is our most recent work-product, directly involving the pay raise/commission issue. Indeed, had JCOPE and LEC been remotely functioning, the Governor, Temporary Senate President, and Assembly Speaker could never have snuck the law creating the Commission on Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Compensation into the budget – and gotten it enacted.

I look forward to speaking with you at your earliest convenience.

Thank you.

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914-421-1200

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