

Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2019 12:36 PM
To: 'ericre@gmail.com'
Subject: LEAD & PARTNERING UP: Your yesterday's article "How Much Do Judges Make in 2019?" (The Street, Aug. 13, 2019)

TO: FREELANCE JOURNALIST-NEWS & ANALYTICAL REPORTER/ATTORNEY ERIC REED

RE: Your yesterday's article "[How Much Do Judges Make in 2019?](https://www.thestreet.com/personal-finance/how-much-do-judges-make-15046259)" (The Street, Aug. 13, 2019)

How about following up your informational/survey-type article with a "deep dive" about how New York's judges became the highest paid state judges in the nation?

It is NOT, as your article reports, because their judicial salaries were set by "the legislature in Albany". Rather, since 2012, their yearly salaries have skyrocketed more than \$80,000, to be highest in the nation, as a result of two sham seven-member commissions, which – in addition to being unconstitutional for a myriad of reasons – flagrantly violated the materially-identical statutes that created them, flagrantly flouted conflict-of-interest rules, and made "force of law" pay raise recommendations that were outrightly fraudulent.

This has been the subject of fierce litigation challenge, since 2012 – NOW before New York's "prestigious and selective" highest state court, the New York Court of Appeals, on which appointive "merit-selected" judges sit. This gives you the opportunity – through a single, explosive case in the nation's "Excelsior State" – to explore not only whether high-pay correlates with having the "sharpest lawyers sitting on the bench", who are the "best and brightest", but whether the quality of justice produced by appointed judges is superior to that of elected judges – which your article implies that it is. Such expose would be a FIRST – and on many fronts. Indeed, in the more than 40 years since New York voters scrapped their constitutional right to elect their Court of Appeals judges in favor of "merit-selection" appointment, there has been NO examination by scholars, bar associations, the so-called "good government organizations", or the press as to whether "merit selection" was "the better way" the voters were led to believe it was. NONE have been willing to examine how "merit selection" has operated in fact (as opposed to the touted theory) – or the supposed "excellence" and "impartiality" of the "merit-selected" appointed judges it has produced, verifiable from their decisions. To the contrary, in face of evidentiary proof, spanning decades, that both "merit selection" and the decisions of those judges were corrupt, scholars, bar associations, "good government organizations", and the press have REFUSED to undertake any investigation, while continuing to promote "merit selection", the supposed quality of New York's judiciary, and judicial pay raises.

That you are an attorney, with a background in litigation: <http://www.ericreedwriter.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Eric-Reed-CV.pdf>, and specializing in "analytical journalism" with a website/blog entitled "Things Dangerous": <http://www.thingsdangerous.com/>, makes you PERFECT for the ground-breaking "enterprise"/investigative journalism here proposed, resting, in the first instance, on **open-and-shut, primary-source, case file evidence, ALL conveniently accessible** from the website of the Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA), www.judgewatch.org, the unfunded, non-partisan, non-profit citizens' organization which has brought the litigation, *pro bono*, "on behalf of the People of the State of New York & the Public Interest". The direct link to the menu page for the lawsuit record before the Court of Appeals, from which the lower court record, before judges both appointed and elected, is accessible, is here: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/searching-nys/budget/citizen-taxpayer-action/2nd/record-ct-of-appeals.htm>.

I am eager to speak with you, *as soon as possible*, about this ground-breaking proposal. This includes, if you are not interested and/or yourself able to pursue it, your referring/forwarding the proposal to fellow journalists, optimally also attorneys, who would. I would be amenable to such “partnering” and “consulting” services as are indicated at the bottom of your “Things Dangerous” website/blog under the title heading “PARTNER UP”.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
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