

By Hand
2/8/03

Subj:	Vindicating the Public's Rights by Your Powerful Editorial Voice
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From:	Judgewatchers
To:	randolph@nytimes.com
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TO: Eleanor Randolph, Editorial Board/The New York Times

FROM: Elena Ruth Sassower, Coordinator
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

RE: Vindicating the Public's Rights:
Bringing Reform to the Legislature by Focusing on its Committees

DATE: February 7, 2003

Thank you again, and again, for your powerful opinion-editorial, "The New York Process: How Not to Get Heard at a Legislative Hearing". May it be the first of many...

As discussed, I have long been begging and pleading that The Times inform its readership -- and the public at large -- about what goes on in the committees of our State Legislature. My most recent effort is attached: my January 29th memo to the Editorial Board, transmitting my letter of that date to Albany Bureau Chief James McKinley, which stated:

"it is time for the Albany Bureau to begin to focus on the legislative committees, rather than making them appear as if they do not exist. The Senate Judiciary Committee is a case study in dysfunction and collusive politics -- and an investigative expose...has ~~to~~ the potential to effect major, far-reaching reform."

I received NO response from either Mr. McKinley or Editorial Page Editor Gail Collins -- and, alas, your otherwise terrific opinion-editorial makes NO mention of what each of them knew -- and should have told you -- namely, that within the past six weeks our non-partisan, non-profit citizens organization has made a stellar contribution to exposing -- and seeking to halt -- the Senate Judiciary Committee's sham judicial confirmation "hearings": to wit, its sham January 22, 2003 "hearing" to confirm the Governor's former deputy counsel to the Court of Appeals and its sham December 17, 2002 "hearing" to confirm its own Chairman to the Court of Claims.

So that you can see for yourself the magnitude of CJA's contribution -- unreported by The Times, either as news or as an editorial -- attached is our December 16, 2002 letter to the Senate leadership and our January 22, 2003 statement.

For your convenience, I will mail you a duplicate of my January 29th memo to the Editorial Board, enclosing these and other substantiating documents.

Finally -- and most importantly -- I respectfully request to meet with you, at your earliest convenience, so that you can have an opportunity to examine the breathtaking, dispositive documentation on which CJA's December 16th letter and January 22nd statement rest. Such will reinforce how urgently your editorial voice is needed. Hopefully, too, it will persuade The Times Albany Bureau to move forward with an investigative expose based on such meticulous documentation, given to it "on a silver platter".

Elena R. Sassower

Also enclosed:

- ① Senate floor proceedings re Susan Reed's confinement to Ct of Appeals
- ② report of Senate floor proceedings re James Cook's confinement to Ct of Claims