

STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
GEORGE E. PATAKI, GOVERNOR

Press Office
518-474-8418
212-681-4640
<http://www.state.ny.us>

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GOVERNOR NOMINATES ANDREW P. O'ROURKE TO COURT OF CLAIMS

Governor George E. Pataki today announced that he has nominated Westchester County Executive Andrew P. O'Rourke to serve as a Judge of the Court of Claims.

"Andy O'Rourke has served the people of the State of New York and Westchester County with distinction for more than 32 years," Governor Pataki said. "I am confident that he will continue to serve the people with great distinction in his new position of public service."

The New York State Judicial Screening Committee, an independent panel established by Governor Pataki, found Mr. O'Rourke to be highly qualified to serve as a Judge of the Court of Claims.

"I would like to thank Paul Shechtman, the Chair of the New York State Judicial Screening Committee, and the Committee members for volunteering their time and effort to screen judicial candidates," the Governor said. "The Committee's careful consideration of an applicant's intellect, judgment, temperament, character and experience enriches our system of justice."

The nomination to the Court of Claims, which is subject to Senate confirmation, is for a term that expires on March 31, 2006. The job pays \$113,000.

"I am grateful that Governor Pataki has given me an opportunity to continue serving the people of New York," County Executive O'Rourke said. "I look forward to the new challenges ahead."

Mr. O'Rourke has served as Westchester County Executive since 1983. From 1978 until 1982, he had a private law practice in New York City and Westchester County. From 1974 to 1982, he served on the Westchester County Board of Legislators, first as a member and later as its Chair.

In 1965, Mr. O'Rourke was elected to serve on the Yonkers City Council. He served on the City Council through 1973. From 1974 through 1977, Mr. O'Rourke taught law at Fordham University and Mercy College.

Mr. O'Rourke has a lengthy service record in the military. He enlisted in the 165th Infantry, New York National Guard in 1949, obtaining the rank of Private First Class prior to his honorable discharge in 1950. He served on active duty as a navigator from 1955 to 1963. Since 1964, he has been a member of the U.S. Naval Reserve, and currently holds the rank of Captain in the Judge Advocate General's Corps and Rear Admiral in the New York Militia.

He is also the recipient of numerous awards. Mr. O'Rourke was awarded Long Island University's 1984 *Seth Low Award for Distinguished Public Service*, and the Jewish National Fund's highest award, the *Tree of Life*, in recognition of his outstanding community involvement and dedication to the cause of peace and the building of Israel. Other awards include the *Tucker Ashworth Memorial Award* from the Greater Westchester Human Rights Fund for his contribution in the fight against AIDS and the *New York State Decade of the Child Award* for his work on behalf of work for Westchester County school children.

Mr. O'Rourke is a graduate of Fordham College (B.S., 1954), Fordham Law School (J.D., 1962) and New York University School of Law (LL.M, 1965). He has also received an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Mercy College, an Honorary Doctor of Laws from Manhattanville College, and an Honorary Doctor of Laws from Pace University. In 1987, Pace University awarded Mr. O'Rourke its Medal of Honor award.

He is the father of three children.

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