

## Gov tabs ally despite road rage

Gov. Pataki nominated GOP ally Sen. James Lack of Suffolk County to become a Court of Claims judge yesterday, despite a notorious road-rage incident involving a Long Island mother.

Lore Von Hoffen filed a police report over the June 2001 flare-up, when she accused Lack of tailgating her into her East Northport garage after she had passed him in her car.

Von Hoffen said yesterday that Lack waved his Senate badge at her and snapped, "You are goin' to effin' jail!"

"He may have been a great lawmaker, but I don't think he belongs in a courtroom, and I don't think he should hold public office," said Von Hoffen, a physician's assistant who said she is a lifelong Republican.

Lack apologized for the incident, which helped derail his expected state Supreme Court appointment.

Pataki spokesman Joe Conway said that the Judicial Screening Committee reviewed Lack's record and found him highly qualified.

"The governor agrees and is confident that Sen. Lack will be an outstanding judge," he said.

Lack was not immediately available for comment.

Incoming Senate minority leader David Paterson (D-Harlem) said he would support Lack, saying, "How long does he have to carry this cross?"

"I can't hold one or two incidents against a person who has such an outstanding record," Paterson said.

**Joe Mahoney**