

Subject: "Merit Selection" & Eliot Spitzer's "Public Integrity Unit". Do You Want the Lead?

Date: 9/19/2006, 1:44 PM

From: Ctr for Judicial Accountability <judgewatchers@aol.com>

To: ekriss@syracuse.com

Organization: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc.

Dear Erik:

Attached is the AP article, from Newsday.com, reporting Spitzer's endorsement of "merit selection" appointment to replace the convention system for nominating candidates for elective supreme court judgeships. Also, attached info on the Daily News story.

The corruption of "merit selection" was the subject of my December 28, 1998 letter to the editor, "*An Appeal to Fairness: Revisit the Court of Appeals*" in the New York Post -- whose final line read "This is why we will be calling upon our new state attorney general as the 'People's lawyer,' to launch an official investigation".


Three weeks later, at a breakfast for Eliot Spitzer at the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, co-sponsored by the New York Law Journal, Spitzer announced the establishment of his "public integrity unit". I was the first to the microphone & I gave him ALL the particulars & documentation under a January 27, 1999 letter. This is recited by my 3-1/4 page June 20, 2006 memo-letter to the candidates for Attorney General -- whose enclosures include my December 28, 1998 letter to the editor, the TRANSCRIPT of my public exchange with Spitzer on January 27, 1999, his 1998 campaign proposal about his "public integrity unit" -- and CJA's 4-page story proposal that lays everything out.

Full documentary substantiation & more is posted on CJA's website, www.judgewatch.org -- accessible via the sidebar panel, "Elections 2006: Informing the Voters".

Please let me know, by tomorrow morning, if you want me to work with you so that you can break this READILY-VERIFIABLE, FULLY-DOCUMENTED election-altering story -- which bears, as well, on Chairman DeFrancisco's re-election. Otherwise, I will pursue other reporters.

Elena
914-421-1200

 [ap-daily-news-articles-9-6-06.pdf \(138KB\)](#)

 [6-20-06-ag-candidates-19pp.pdf \(1896KB\)](#)

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Faso says Spitzer's judicial proposal bad idea

By WILLIAM KATES
Associated Press Writer

September 6, 2006, 4:05 PM EDT

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Democrat Eliot Spitzer's plan to abolish judicial elections and give the governor power to appoint the state's trial judges shows he is "power hungry" and wants to deny voters the chance to choose their own jurists, Republican gubernatorial candidate John Faso said Wednesday.

For years, state Supreme Court justices have been nominated at conventions controlled by party bosses. Last month, a federal appeals court upheld an earlier ruling that declared the method unconstitutional and that ordered the state to elect judges through more open primaries.

Spitzer, who is running for governor, on Wednesday told the New York Daily News that a better way to select state justices would be to have them appointed by the governor, sparing judges from having to campaign for office.

"Look, we all know this is the last vestige of real patronage in the political party structure," he told the newspaper. "What I want is merit selection."

He said if he's elected, he'll push for a constitutional amendment eliminating judicial elections.

Faso, in Syracuse to promote his Medicaid reform proposals, said the federal courts had made a rational decision but he criticized Spitzer's plan.

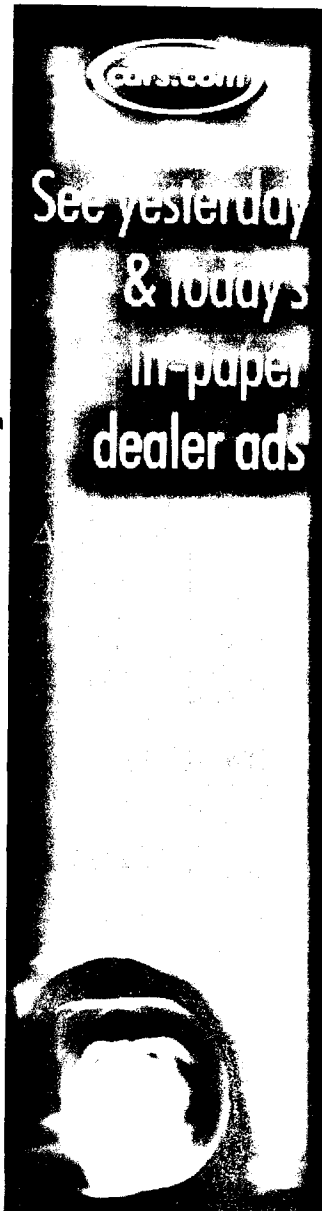
"I think it is a fundamentally bad idea to have the governor appointing all the supreme court justices in the state," Faso said.

"Mr. Spitzer seems to want to consolidate an awful lot of power in his hands. I think that Mr. Spitzer is certainly power hungry and this is an example of how he is overreaching already," Faso said.

"I don't think taking away the people's right to choose those judges is a good idea. Eliot Spitzer wants to take the power to himself and away from the people," Faso said.

Faso agreed that it was important to insulate judicial candidates as much as possible from the political process. Instead, he suggested nonpartisan election of judges or imposing restrictions on how money could be raised in judicial campaigns.

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DAVID SALTONSTALL DAILY NEWS SENIOR CORRESPONDENT. New York Daily News. New York, N.Y.: Sep 6, 2006. pg. 17

Abstract (Document Summary)

DEMOCRAT ELIOT Spitzer fired a shot yesterday at some of the Democratic Party bosses who support his gubernatorial bid - saying that if elected he'd move to strip their influence in selecting state judges.

For years, state Supreme Court justices have been nominated at conventions that are wholly controlled by party bosses - including those in Democratic strongholds like the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens that ...

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