

**From:** elena@judgewatch.org  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 8, 2026 6:03 PM  
**To:** 'ellie\_lottero@harvard.edu'  
**Cc:** 'mark\_armstrong@harvard.edu'

**Subject:** For Scholarship, Teaching, Reporting, & Amicus Curiae -- Federal Lawsuit vs The NYT & 33 Other Press Defendants, in Vindication of the First Amendment, & Constitutional, Lawful NYS Governance

**Attachments:** [no18-1-oct29-2025-verified-amended-complaint-signed-by-zerman.pdf](#)

**TO:** [Ellie Lottero/Nieman Foundation for Journalism Director of Administration & Fellows' Liaison](#)

Thank you for your return call, just concluded – and for assuring me that my below important e-mail, that I am now sending you, is furnished to appropriate persons, as I requested.

As discussed, I take this opportunity to cc Mark Armstrong on this e-mail, which, only when reviewing with you the e-mail addresses at Nieman Foundation to which I had sent it, did I realize I had inadvertently omitted his.

Thank you, again.

Elena Sassower  
914-421-1200  
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**From:** [elena@judgewatch.org](mailto:elena@judgewatch.org) <[elena@judgewatch.org](mailto:elena@judgewatch.org)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 8, 2026 5:09 PM  
**To:** 'nancy\_gibbs@hks.harvard.edu' <[nancy\\_gibbs@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:nancy_gibbs@hks.harvard.edu)>; 'thomas\_patterson@hks.harvard.edu' <[thomas\\_patterson@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:thomas_patterson@hks.harvard.edu)>; 'taubman@hks.harvard.edu' <[taubman@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:taubman@hks.harvard.edu)>; 'jeffrey\_liebman@harvard.edu' <[jeffrey\\_liebman@harvard.edu](mailto:jeffrey_liebman@harvard.edu)>; 'govlab@hks.harvard.edu' <[govlab@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:govlab@hks.harvard.edu)>; 'henry\_chu@harvard.edu' <[henry\\_chu@harvard.edu](mailto:henry_chu@harvard.edu)>; 'samantha\_henry@harvard.edu' <[samantha\\_henry@harvard.edu](mailto:samantha_henry@harvard.edu)>; 'laura\_owen@harvard.edu' <[laura\\_owen@harvard.edu](mailto:laura_owen@harvard.edu)>; 'iop\_info@hks.harvard.edu' <[iop\\_info@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:iop_info@hks.harvard.edu)>; 'ctr\_public\_leadership@hks.harvard.edu' <[ctr\\_public\\_leadership@hks.harvard.edu](mailto:ctr_public_leadership@hks.harvard.edu)>  
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**Subject:** For Scholarship, Teaching, Reporting, & Amicus Curiae -- Federal Lawsuit vs The NYT & 33 Other Press Defendants, in Vindication of the First Amendment, & Constitutional, Lawful NYS Governance

TO: [HARVARD UNIVERSITY](#)

[KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT](#)

[Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy](#)

[Director Nancy Gibbs, Professor of the Practice of Press, Politics and Public Policy](#)

[Professor of Government & the Press Thomas E. Patterson](#)

[Taubman Center for State and Local Government](#) & its [Government Performance Lab](#)

[Director Jeffrey Liebman, Professor of Public Policy](#)

[Institute of Politics](#)

[Interim Co-Directors Beth Myers & Ned Price](#)

[Center for Public Leadership](#)

[NIEMAN FOUNDATION FOR JOURNALISM](#)

[Interim Curator Henry Chu](#)

[Nieman Reports Editor Samantha Henry](#)

[Nieman Journalism Lab Editor Laura Hazard Owen](#)

[Nieman Storyboard Editor Mark Armstrong](#)

I am co-founder and director of the non-partisan, nonprofit citizens' organization [Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. \(CJA\)](#) and am writing to alert you to a major federal lawsuit against [The New York Times](#) and 33 other press defendants, which we have brought "*on behalf of the People of the State of New York & the Public Interest*". Above-attached and here-linked is the [October 29<sup>th</sup> verified amended complaint](#), as signed by CJA's attorney on January 5<sup>th</sup> and refiled, whose first paragraph reads:

"Pursuant to Article IV, §4 of the United States Constitution, 'The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government...', and the First Amendment to the Constitution pertaining to the press, as explicated by federal caselaw...and the First Amendment's guarantee of 'the right of the people...to petition the Government for a redress of grievances', and the further guarantees of the Fifth Amendment<sup>fn</sup> and the Fourteenth Amendment, §1<sup>fn</sup> to every 'person' of 'due process of law' and 'the equal protection of laws', plaintiffs seek declaratory relief and compensatory, presumed, and punitive damages against defendants for their knowingly false, 'fake news', corruption-abetting, election-rigging journalism, concealing and enabling the destruction of constitutional, lawful governance in New York State, culminating in corrupt candidates running on the 2025 election ballots – and, in particular, for New York City mayor, for New York City public advocate, for Manhattan borough president, for Manhattan district attorney, for Brooklyn district attorney, and to be district attorneys in approximately a dozen other counties throughout the state – and their election." (italics in the original, underlining added).

Hyperlinking to a mountain of [primary-source, documentary evidence, spanning decades](#), the October 29<sup>th</sup> verified amended complaint provides a devastating window into how the press ACTUALLY operates, focusing on the 2025 electoral win of Zohran Mamdani as NYC mayor, and seeks, in vindication of the First Amendment, judicial recognition of causes of action for "journalistic fraud" and "reckless institutional disregard for truth" – the same two causes of action to which I alerted the Shorenstein Center, Nieman Foundation, and Professor Patterson nearly two decades ago, in connection with CJA's groundbreaking prior lawsuit against the [NYT](#), identified at ¶¶6(c), (d), and 75.

**Please confirm that you will be incorporating the October 29<sup>th</sup> verified amended complaint into your scholarship and teaching and that you will disseminate it to your students for their own academic**

**projects and reporting.** In that regard, I note that [Neiman Lab](#) posts a list of “[What We’re Reading](#)” whose linked-to “[Mayor Mamdani meets the \(creator\) press](#)” – a January 7<sup>th</sup> article by [NYT](#) media reporter Michael Grynbaum – reads, in pertinent part:

“An online army of social media influencers and digital content creators played a major role in propelling Mr. Mamdani to his improbable victory in last year’s mayoral race, amassing public support for the once-obscure state assemblyman one TikTok, Instagram reel and Substack post at a time.

On Wednesday, Mr. Mamdani returned the favor, inviting dozens of ‘new media’ figures to City Hall for a tour and a private news conference. Reporters from ‘legacy media’ outlets like The New York Post and NY1, who aggressively cover the daily workings of municipal government, were prohibited. (A New York Times media reporter was allowed to observe.)

Finding ways to elide the traditional, skeptical press is an increasingly common tactic for politicians from both parties, who use social media to promote their message, with little resistance, to the millions who rely on the internet for news.”  
(underlining added).

The facts as to how the “improbable victory” of this “once-obscure state assemblyman” was ACTUALLY achieved, which was by ZERO reporting of the open-and-shut, *prima facie* evidence of his corruption as a NYS assemblyman by “the traditional, skeptical press” – and the NON-existence of even competent, let alone “aggressive” coverage, of “the daily workings of municipal government” by “The New York Post and NY1” or any other “legacy” or new media press – are furnished, with evidence, by the lawsuit, to which [The New York Post](#) and [NY1](#) are defendants. Did none of Mr. Grynbaum’s colleagues at the [NYT](#) alert him to the lawsuit – and to the succession of e-mails I sent to the [NYT](#) preceding and following its commencement on October 8<sup>th</sup>?

The same Nieman Lab “[What We’re Reading](#)” list also includes a link for “[CBS News staffers on the Bari Weiss era: ‘deep embarrassment, coupled with growing alarm’](#)” – a January 6<sup>th</sup> article by Oliver Darcy in his [Status](#) newsletter, presumably written by him without knowledge of Ms. Weiss’ collusion in the press corruption, including by CBS, that enabled Mamdani’s electoral win, for which Ms. Weiss’ [The Free Press](#) and CBS are each defendants in the lawsuit.

By the way, **what does your research show – and what do you teach – about press reporting of lawsuits against the press.** None of the 34 press defendants have reported on CJA’s lawsuit. Will they – and will Mr. Darcy, now that he knows of it? I am cc’ing Mr. Darcy and Mr. Grynbaum so that they can be part of the conversation.

Finally, **please advise whether you would be able file an *amicus curiae* brief in the lawsuit and/or whether you will forward this e-mail to other entities and law professors at Harvard positioned to do so.** I and CJA’s attorney believe the lawsuit to be a summary judgment case, with NO defense to it, factually or legally, and that the SOLE issue will be the magnitude of compensatory, presumed, and punitive damages – a jury determination that will reasonably be many tens of billions of dollars. The district court’s unprecedented handling of the lawsuit, as highlighted by my [December 19<sup>th</sup> affidavit](#), reinforces this. What are your opinions? And what will your Harvard journalism/law/political

science/government students conclude upon interviewing Harvard's myriad of professors who are experts in federal practice and constitutional and First Amendment law.

I look forward to discussing the foregoing with you, as soon as possible.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director  
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