



PRESS RELEASE

New York State
Unified Court System

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Hon. A. Gail Prudenti
Chief Administrative Judge

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Date: February 25, 2013

Chief Judge Names Hon. Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick as Co-Chair of Task Force Aimed at Eliminating Wrongful Convictions in New York State

NEW YORK – Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman today designated former Senior Associate Court of Appeals Judge Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick as co-chair of the New York State Justice Task Force, filling a post previously held by the late Associate Judge of the Court of Appeals Theodore T. Jones, Jr. Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick joins Co-chair and Westchester County District Attorney Janet DiFiore to lead the Justice Task Force, which was formed by Judge Lippman in 2009 to examine the causes of wrongful convictions in an effort to prevent their occurrence and whose members include prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, police chiefs, legal scholars, forensic experts and victims’ advocates.

“Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick is a tireless advocate for justice, a trailblazer in the court system and Court of Appeals who is widely regarded for her scholarly knowledge of the law, keen insight and exceptional leadership. I can think of no better choice for this important role and look forward to working with her, Co-Chair Janet DiFiore, the Justice Task Force members and the courts’ other partners as we continue to make significant strides toward the elimination of the scourge of wrongful convictions in our state,” said Chief Judge Lippman, in announcing the appointment.

Added Judge Lippman, “I would like to pay a special tribute to the Justice Task Force’s former co-chair, my dear, late colleague and friend, the Hon. Theodore T. Jones, who served the state’s Justice Task Force and legal community with distinction until his untimely passing last November. He was an exemplary jurist and singular human being whose wisdom and kindness will always be missed, and whose legacy will continue to inspire the critical work of the task force and our justice system.”

“Chief Judge Lippman could not have appointed a more qualified and experienced jurist to co-chair the New York State Justice Task Force than former Senior Associate Judge of the Court of Appeals Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick. Although the contributions of Judge Theodore Jones continue to be missed, Judge Ciparick’s background, her unswerving sense of fairness and knowledge of the criminal justice system make her the perfect successor to the late Judge Jones,” said Westchester County District Attorney and New York State Justice Task Force Co-Chair Janet DiFiore.

A New York City native, Hon. Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick graduated from Hunter College and received her J.D. from St. John’s University School of Law. She was appointed to the Court of Appeals in 1993, becoming the first Hispanic to serve on the Court, and reappointed in 2007, serving through 2012, the year she reached mandatory retirement age. She first joined the court system in 1969 as an assistant counsel for the Judicial Conference of the State of New York—now the Office of Court Administration—subsequently serving as Chief Law Assistant of New York City Criminal Court and counsel in the Office of the New York City Administrative Judge. In 1978, she was appointed to the New York City Criminal Court bench, and in 1982 was elected to the New York State Supreme Court. Early in her career, she was a staff attorney with the Legal Aid Society in New York City. She is currently of counsel to Greenberg Traurig LLP.

In the years since the Justice Task Force was appointed by Judge Lippman, the group has painstakingly examined the causes of known wrongful convictions, identifying patterns and practices that increase their likelihood and developing recommendations for action throughout the criminal justice system to safeguard against their occurrence.

Among the recommendations put forth by the task force was the expansion of the state’s DNA data bank, a measure signed into law last year that will better enable law enforcement to identify those who perpetrate crimes and enhance the ability of the innocent to attain exoneration. With eyewitness misidentification the single leading cause of wrongful convictions

nationwide, the Justice Task Force has also called for the reform of eyewitness identification procedures, resulting in proposed legislation to promote more accurate identifications. To learn more about the New York State Justice Task Force, visit www.nyjusticetaskforce.com.

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