



PRESS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

**Hon. A. Gail Prudenti
Chief Administrative Judge**

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Chief Judge Names Compensation Commission Appointees

New York — Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman today announced the appointments of Sheila L. Birnbaum, Esq. and Hon. Barry A. Cozier, formerly of New York State’s appellate bench, to the Commission on Legislative, Judicial and Executive Compensation, an independent body established every four years to examine and make recommendations with respect to appropriate levels of compensation for New York State’s judges, state legislators and statewide elected officials. The Commission comprises seven appointed members — three designated by the Governor, two by the Chief Judge, one by the President of the Senate and one by the Speaker of the Assembly — with Ms. Birnbaum to serve as chair.

“We are extremely fortunate to have two such eminently qualified, dedicated individuals to assume the challenges of these critical posts. Highly esteemed for their many accomplishments and extraordinary service and leadership, Ms. Birnbaum and Justice Cozier bring enormous skills, experience and credibility to their respective roles. I have every confidence they will be great assets to the Commission and its important work,” said Judge Lippman.

“I am delighted that Ms. Birnbaum and Justice Cozier will be joining the Commission and can think of no two finer candidates to fill these vital appointments. Undoubtedly, the

Commission will benefit tremendously from their vast expertise, unbridled energy and commitment,” said Chief Administrative Judge A. Gail Prudenti.

Ms. Birnbaum is broadly recognized as a trailblazer and role model to women in the legal profession. She has acted as a national or lead counsel for numerous Fortune 500 companies in some of the largest, most complex tort cases in the country, setting the standards that helped pioneer the practices of product liability and mass torts law. A partner at Quinn Emanuel Trial Lawyers, she was previously a partner at Skadden Arps, and before that served as counsel to the firm while she was a professor of law and associate dean at New York University School of Law. From 2006 to 2009, Ms. Birnbaum mediated settlements for 92 families of victims of the 9-11 attacks who decided to pursue their claims in court rather than be compensated by the original compensation fund. She was subsequently tapped by then-U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to serve as special master of the revived September 11th Victim Compensation Fund, for which she has been charged with distributing \$2.8 billion to compensate Ground Zero rescue workers and New York residents who suffered health problems following the 9-11 attacks. A past President of the New York Women’s Bar Association, Ms. Birnbaum has participated on a variety of legal and judicial committees and is the recipient of numerous awards and honors for legal excellence.

Senior counsel at the law firm of LeClair Ryan where he represents clients in complex commercial litigation, employment law litigation and federal and state appeals, the Hon. Barry Cozier previously served the New York State Judiciary with distinction for two decades, most recently as an Associate Justice of the Appellate Division, Second Department. Prior to embarking on his judicial career, he was in private practice and held various public sector legal positions, including as an associate general counsel for New York City’s Human Resources Administration. Having decided to leave the bench in large measure due to the lengthy pay freeze — from 1999 through 2011 — endured by New York State’s judges, Justice Cozier is acutely aware of the importance of setting a fair judicial pay scale to reduce turnover and ensure New York’s citizens access to a high quality bench. Among his many distinctions, Justice Cozier has been honored by the New York County Lawyers’ Association, the New York City Trial Lawyers Association, the New York Urban League Advisory Board and the Jewish Lawyers Guild for his public service and contributions to the legal profession. He serves as Vice Chair of both the New York Commission on Statewide Attorney Discipline and the New York City

Mayor's Advisory Committee on the Judiciary, as well as a member of the New York State
Judicial Screening Committee for the First Department.

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