



**PARTNERSHIP**  
for New York City

**STATEMENT OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR NEW YORK CITY**

**PRESIDENT and C.E.O. KATHRYN S. WYLDE**

**TO THE NEW YORK STATE**

**COMMISSION ON LEGISLATIVE, JUDICIAL & EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION**

(November 30, 2015)

The Partnership for New York City is a nonprofit organization comprised of a select group of CEOs whose companies collectively employ 1.5 million New Yorkers. The Partnership's mission is to engage the business community in efforts to advance the City's economy and maintain its status as the world's center of commerce, finance and innovation.

A well-functioning, high-quality and independent judiciary is indispensable to a positive business environment and to promoting economic growth in our City and State. The Partnership has long supported fair and reasonable judicial salaries. We have also taken a leadership role in urging reform of the process by which the compensation of judges and other public officials is determined. The Partnership was a strong supporter of a Commission-based process to determine the compensation of judges in an open, objective and nonpartisan manner. Indeed, I had the honor of serving as a member of the 2011 Special Commission on Judicial Compensation, which was created by statute to independently evaluate and make binding recommendations with respect to the salary levels of New York State's judges.

In 2011, I agreed with the Commission's conclusion that a salary increase establishing parity between State Supreme Court Justices and Federal District Court Judges was a fair and reasonable recommendation. At the time, fiscal conditions facing the State were substantially more difficult than they are today and the Commission recommended a three-year phase in of parity between State judges and their federal counterparts. My position, at that time, was that state judges had been denied a pay adjustment for 12 years and should have been granted the pay increase without any delay.

Four years later, with the State economy on solid ground, it is clear that State judges should immediately be brought to the compensation level of their federal counterparts. Re-establishing pay parity with the Federal Judiciary would send a powerful message about the critical importance to our State of a strong, well-qualified and independent judiciary. New York City is a center of international business and finance, and the commercial caseload facing our judiciary is particularly complex and demanding. Fair and reasonable compensation is a critical factor in our ability to attract and retain judges who are up to the task of handling these challenging caseloads. Parity with federal judicial salaries is supported by history and by the work of the 2011 Special Commission on Judicial Compensation. It would restore New York's judicial pay to appropriate, inflation-adjusted levels, and avoid the damaging perception and reality that New York's judges are among the lowest paid in the nation when our State's high cost of living is factored in.