



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 393

Resolution commending Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature for enacting legislation which increases the number of Family Court judges throughout the state and urging them to continue to regularly assess the need to appoint more judges in New York City.

By Council Members Barron, Gentile, Mendez and Rodriguez

Whereas, Family Court judges play an important role in our judicial system; and

Whereas, Each day, Family Court judges are charged with making critical decisions that have a direct and immediate impact on the safety and stability of children and families alike; and

Whereas, Family Court judges preside over important cases involving minors, including juvenile delinquency charges, child abuse and neglect, termination of parental rights, adoption, and guardianships; and

Whereas, Additionally, victims of domestic or intimate partner violence may seek recourse at a family court to obtain an order of protection, in which the judge can order a respondent to stay away from a victim's home, work place, or other locations; and

Whereas, Despite their commitment to meting out justice, Family Court judges have been saddled with overwhelming caseloads; and

Whereas, Individuals face exorbitant delays in family courts because of the amount of cases on a judge's calendar;

Whereas, According to the *New York Law Journal*, no new Family Court judge positions have been created in New York City since 1990 and since 2005 in the rest of the state; and

Whereas, Recognizing the need to ease the strain on family courts, State Senator John Bonacic and Assemblywoman Helene E. Weinstein introduced S.07883 and A.10139, respectively, which

amended the New York State Family Court Act by increasing the number of Family Court Judges by 25 throughout the state; and

Whereas, S.07883 and A.10139 increases the number of Family Court judges in New York City by 9 (bringing the total to 56, effective January 1, 2015) and adds 16 new judges in various upstate counties (11 in 2015 and 5 in 2016); and

Whereas, On June 19 and 20, the Assembly and the Senate passed A.10139 and S.07883, respectively, and on June 26, 2014, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed the bill into law; and

Whereas, This is a significant victory for the City and State and the many advocates who worked tirelessly to secure additional judgeships, including Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman, Chief Administrative Judge A. Gail Prudenti, The New York State Coalition for More Family Court Judges, and the New York State Bar Association; and

Whereas, New York State should be commended for seizing the momentum to pass this important legislative bill; and

Whereas, Although this law is an important step towards ensuring adequate judicial resources in our family courts, the New York State Legislature should continue to assess the need to appoint more Family Court judges in New York City; and

Whereas, Additional judgeships in New York City would help meet the needs of children and families that come before the court, now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York commends Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature for enacting legislation, which increases the number of Family Court judges throughout the state and urging them to continue to regularly assess the need to appoint more judges in New York City.

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