CAMPAIGN BRIEF: NO NEW TERMS FOR JUDGE DEL GIUDICE

A NEW CAMPAIGN FOR JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

In April 2024, CCA launched a new campaign to draw attention to trial court judges, with an exclusive in The New York Times, "N.Y. Criminal Justice Group to Push for More Scrutiny of Judges."

OUR CAMPAIGN: JUDGES SHOULD HAVE TO EARN NEW TERMS

New York's judges are appointed or elected to terms in office. The choice to give judges limited terms rather than life tenure was intentional: New Yorkers believe that as public servants, our judges should be accountable to us, the people of the state.

For both appointed and elected judges, our systems of judicial selection are designed so New Yorkers and our elected officials can evaluate judges' records—and to ensure that judges earn additional terms on the bench. Judges who mistreat and disrespect the people in their courtrooms, who do not hold themselves to the high standard of conduct that we expect of judges, or who are so punitive that they must be repeatedly reined in by other judges, do not belong on the bench. They hurt our communities and damage the integrity of the court system.

In a system rife with injustices and inequities that disproportionately harm communities of color and poor New Yorkers, our political leaders must not protect and promote the worst offenders on the bench. Judges must no longer be automatically renominated and reappointed to new terms, without evaluation or scrutiny of their records."

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A LONG RECORD OF EXCESSIVE PUNISHMENT AND DISRESPECT

We drew particular attention to one judge in Brooklyn, Vincent Del Giudice, who had shown that he was unfit for the bench because in more than 20 years as a judge, he was by far the most punitive active judge in the New York City metropolitan area, and because he was well known for being disrespectful toward defendants and attorneys. Most egregiously, he sentenced one teenage defendant to life in prison while telling him, "You are a lost soul. You are almost beyond redemption"—only for him to be exonerated and freed after 18 years in prison.

OUR DEMAND: REPLACE JUDGE DEL GIUDICE

We demanded that, because Del Giudice's term had expired and he was serving in "holdover" status, Governor Hochul immediately nominate someone to replace him, not allowing him to remain on the bench any longer.

OUTCOME: LESS THAN TWO WEEKS LATER, DEL GIUDICE ANNOUNCED HIS RETIREMENT

Less than two weeks later, Del Giudice started telling people that he would retire, which the Daily News, Brooklyn Eagle, and New York Law Journal covered.

EXPLORE MORE ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN

To learn more about this campaign, see:

- This 2-pager about the campaign, including information Justice Del Giudice's record
- A longer factsheet about Del Giudice's judicial record
- The campaign website