

State of New York  
Commission on Judicial Nomination

1133 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, New York 10036-6710  
(212) 336-2685  
FAX (212) 336-2222  
[spyounger@pbwt.com](mailto:spyounger@pbwt.com)  
[www.nysegov.com/cjn](http://www.nysegov.com/cjn)

Judith S. Kaye, Chair  
John A. Cirando  
Ruth Friendly  
Janet M. Kassar  
Elena H. Kiam  
Gerald B. Lefcourt  
Alan Mansfield  
E. Leo Milonas  
Margaret S. Morton  
Richard P. Nathan  
David M. Schwartz

Stephen P. Younger, Counsel  
John J. Halloran, Jr., Deputy Counsel  
Katrina E. James, Assistant Counsel  
Norman W. Kee, Assistant Counsel  
Stuart A. Summit, Senior Counsel

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Contact: Stephen P. Younger, Counsel  
Phone: (212) 336-2685  
email: [spyounger@pbwt.com](mailto:spyounger@pbwt.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Pursuant to its rules, the Commission on Judicial Nomination announces that the terms of three Commissioners – Ruth W. Friendly, Alan Mansfield, and Sarah Ramos – will expire as of March 31, 2012. The decision to reappoint Ms. Friendly or select a successor will be made by Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman. The decision to reappoint Mr. Mansfield or select a successor will be made by Senate Minority Leader John L. Sampson. The decision to reappoint Ms. Ramos or select a successor will be made by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo.

Ruth W. Friendly is vice president and senior editorial director of Fred Friendly Seminars, Inc., continuing the work initiated by her husband, Fred Friendly. Starting in 1980, she worked with her husband creating and expanding the Columbia University Media & Society Seminars to promote constructive dialogue on complex contemporary issues. Ms. Friendly has served as executive producer, producer, editor, and researcher on more than 80 hours of Seminars programming for PBS. Ms. Friendly has also produced over 300 non-televised seminars for groups across the country. Prior to 1980, Ms. Friendly taught for seventeen years in the Scarsdale public school system. She received her B.A. from Smith College and her M.A. from Teachers College, Columbia University. Ms. Friendly has served on the Commission since 2008.

Alan Mansfield chairs the litigation practice of the New York office of Greenberg Traurig, LLP and serves on the firm's executive committee. Mr. Mansfield handles complex civil litigation and white-collar criminal matters, representing clients in diverse industries in matters ranging from product liability to corporate and securities to defamation and fraud. Mr. Mansfield is a former Chair of the Board of Directors of MFY Legal Services, Inc., and

continues to serve on MFY's Board. He graduated from Brown University and Duke University School of Law. He has served on the Commission since 1996.

Sarah Ramos is a general practice attorney based in Monroe, New York. Ms. Ramos is the Chair of the Village of South Blooming Grove Zoning Board of Appeals. Additionally, Ms. Ramos serves as the special prosecuting attorney for the Town of Monroe. Ms. Ramos is a veteran of the United States Army, and a graduate of the University of Rochester and Pace Law School. She has served on the Commission since 2010.

In addition, the terms of three other Commissioners previously expired: Janet M. Kassar, Elena H. Kiam, and Richard P. Nathan. The decision to reappoint Ms. Kassar and Ms. Kiam or to select their successor will be made by Governor Cuomo. The decision to reappoint Mr. Nathan or select a successor will be made by Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman.

Janet Kassar is supervisor of the Estates, Tax and Accounting Departments at Connors and Sullivan, P.C., and President of Mayo Realty Co., Inc. Prior to moving to New York, Ms. Kassar was a title insurance agent and was Vice President of a land title company in Louisiana. Ms. Kassar is or has been involved in a number of community activities including Habitat for Humanity, the Rotary Club, the Dyker Heights Civic Association, and the Louisiana Choral Foundation. Ms. Kassar is a graduate of Centenary College of Louisiana, and attended McNeese State University. She has served on the Commission since 1998.

Elena Hahn Kiam is creative director and co-owner of lia sophia, the leading global direct seller of fashion jewelry. Ms. Kiam previously worked for 15 years at J.P. Morgan in corporate finance and private banking/asset management. Ms. Kiam serves on the boards of Dress For Success, the 92nd Street Y and the Nightingale-Bamford School and is a member of the Committee of 200. Ms. Kiam is a graduate of Harvard University. She has served on the Commission since 2007.

Richard P. Nathan is the retired co-director of the Rockefeller Institute of Government and Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at the State University of New York at Albany. Prior to joining SUNY-Albany, Dr. Nathan was a professor at Princeton University. Dr. Nathan previously served in the federal government as assistant director of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, deputy under secretary for welfare reform of the U.S. Department of Health Education and Welfare, and director of domestic policy for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (The Kerner Commission). Dr. Nathan is a graduate of Brown University and Harvard University. He has served on the Commission since 2002.

Under the Constitution and laws of the State of New York, the Commission on Judicial Nomination is entrusted with responsibility for evaluating, and then recommending to the Governor, candidates to fill vacancies on the State's highest court, the Court of Appeals of the State of New York. The Commission vigorously seeks out, carefully evaluates and then nominates to the Governor well qualified candidates from the extraordinary, diverse community of lawyers admitted to practice in New York State for at least 10 years.

Rule 7100.3 of the Commission's rules addresses the subject of vacancies on the Commission, and provides:

Commission membership is governed by section 62 of the Judiciary Law. No later than 60 days prior to the occurrence of a scheduled vacancy on the commission, and as soon as practicable for any other vacancy on the commission, notice will be published on the commission's website, distributed to the media, bar associations throughout the State and other persons and organizations (as registered with the commission under section 7100.11 of these rules), and sent in writing to the relevant appointing authority. This notice will be accompanied by a statement that the ultimate objectives of wide diversity and broad outreach in the nomination of well qualified candidates for the Court of Appeals are best served by a commission that itself reflects the diversity of New York's citizenry. The statement will further note that, consistent with the commission's own commitment to diversity, as set forth in section 7100.8(e) of these rules, appointing authorities should consider appointing highly qualified individuals from a variety of backgrounds.

Persons who wish to be Commissioners or who have comments regarding the appointment process are encouraged to contact Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman, or Senate Minority Leader John L. Sampson.