



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruth Hassell-Thompson

## Chief Judge Lippman to Testify at Joint Public Hearing to Address Civil Legal Service Funding Crisis

RUTH HASSELL-THOMPSON January 6, 2010

| ISSUE: **JUDICIARY**

| COMMITTEE: **CRIME VICTIMS, CRIME AND CORRECTION**

### *New Yorkers Facing Mounting Legal Crises Meet Senate Leaders*

(Albany, NY)-Committed to meeting the needs of individuals and families facing foreclosure, domestic violence, eviction proceedings and other civil legal issues, New York State Senators John Sampson, Ruth Hassell-Thompson and Assemblywoman Helene Weinstein will sponsor a joint hearing with the Assembly on Thursday, January 7, 2010 to explore the need for reform of the civil legal service system to ensure that core justice values are protected for all New Yorkers in this difficult economy. Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman of the New York State Court of Appeals is scheduled to testify.

Testimony will be heard from individuals regarding the devastating and long lasting effects on New Yorkers who rely on civil legal services that may no longer be available to them due to the financial crisis that the New York State Interest on Lawyer Account Fund (IOLA) is facing. Testimony will also be heard to gather suggestions on how to restructure civil legal service funding in the future.

The IOLA Fund – which harnesses private funds, mainly from attorney escrow accounts, is used as a means to provide additional financial support to civil legal service organizations. As the economy is depressed and interest rates are low, civil legal services funding sources face devastating cuts just as the need for services dramatically rises.

The first hearing was held in Manhattan on December 9, 2009 followed by a hearing in Buffalo on December 16, 2009.

#### **WHO:**

- Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson, Chairwoman of the Committee on Crime Victims, Crime and Correction and Conference Chairwoman
- Senate Majority Conference Leader John L. Sampson, Chairman of the Committee on Judiciary
- Senator Neil D. Breslin, Chairman of the Insurance Committee
- Assemblywoman Helene Weinstein, Chairwoman of the Assembly Committee on Judiciary
- Assemblyman Daniel O'Donnell, Chairman of the Assembly Subcommittee on Criminal Procedure
- Assemblyman Rory Lancman, Member of the Assembly Committee on Judiciary

**TESTIFYING:**

- Honorable Jonathan Lippman, Chief Judge, New York State Court of Appeals
- Christopher O'Malley, Executive Director, IOLA
- Honorable Kathie Davidson, Supervising Judge of the Family Court, 9<sup>th</sup> Judicial District
- Lillian M. Moy, Esq. Executive Director, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York
- Dorchen Leidholdt, Esq. Director, Center for Battered Women Legal Services, Sanctuary for Families
- Michael Getnick, Esq. President, New York State Bar Association
- Stephen Acquario, Executive Director, New York State Association of Counties
- Other leaders from legal, academic, business, government and community groups
- Civil Legal Service Recipients

**WHERE:**

Meeting Room 6  
The Concourse  
Albany, NY

**WHEN:**

Thursday, January 7, 2010 at 11:00 A.M.

**Note: This hearing can be viewed live at [www.livestream.com/nysenate2](http://www.livestream.com/nysenate2) and will also be broadcast live on the attached cable channels.**

New York State Legislative Proceedings

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