



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

## Statement of Senators Brian Kavanagh and Liz Krueger on the Nomination of Justice Hector D. LaSalle to Serve as Chief Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals

BRIAN KAVANAGH January 18, 2023

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“Deciding whether to approve or reject judicial nominations is one of the Senate’s most significant constitutionally mandated responsibilities. It is particularly important that we honor the seriousness of this duty and the import of our decision when we are considering a nominee to serve as the leader of New York’s Unified Court System and the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, the court that is the ultimate arbiter of the very meaning of our laws.

“Since December 23, 2022 when we received Governor Kathy Hochul’s nomination of Justice Hector D. LaSalle, we felt it was important that there be a thorough review of the many factors that are relevant to a fair consideration of the nomination. In particular, we wanted the Judiciary Committee to have the opportunity to carry out its essential function in our process. We appreciate that Judiciary Chair Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal and our colleagues on the Committee have now done so, and that they have given Justice LaSalle an opportunity to present his views and qualifications and to answer the questions of Senators from both parties in an open public forum.

“Now that the Committee has completed its work and voted to reject this nomination, and based on the many perspectives we have heard from New Yorkers both for and against the nomination, the proceedings of the Committee today, and the Committee’s recommendation, we do not support the nomination of Justice LaSalle. We come to this conclusion with no disrespect for the Governor or for her right to nominate a Chief Judge, nor for Justice LaSalle himself. However, in this essential exercise of the Senate’s authority as a coequal branch of government, we simply disagree that Justice LaSalle is the person New Yorkers need in the profoundly important and powerful position for which he has been nominated.

“We thank Senator Hoylman-Sigal and all of the members of the Judiciary Committee for affording Justice LaSalle a fair hearing. We also thank Justice LaSalle for his willingness to serve and for participating in this difficult process, and we wish him well.

“We stand ready to work with Governor Hochul and Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins to consider and approve another nominee.”

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