



NEW YORK STATE  
COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

ROBERT H. TEMBECKJIAN  
ADMINISTRATOR & COUNSEL

CORNING TOWER, SUITE 2301  
EMPIRE STATE PLAZA  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12223

518-453-4600 518-299-1757  
TELEPHONE FACSIMILE  
[www.cjc.ny.gov](http://www.cjc.ny.gov)

MARISA E. HARRISON  
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

## NEWS RELEASE

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**Contact:**

**Marisa E. Harrison, Public Information Officer**  
**(518) 453-4600**

### **Supreme Court Justice in Bronx County Should Be Censured for Poor Demeanor**

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The New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct has determined that Naita A. Semaj, a Justice of the Supreme Court, 12<sup>th</sup> Judicial District (Bronx County), should be censured for repeated poor demeanor on the bench, particularly toward assistant district attorneys (ADAs).

Judge Semaj agreed to the censure.

Between March 2022 and April 2023, Judge Semaj unjustifiably ejected three ADAs from her courtroom, yelled at ADAs who appeared before her, made sarcastic comments about them, and inappropriately commented on the pregnancy of one of them.

In its determination the Commission stated that Judge Semaj, who despite being counseled by an administrative judge, “continued to be impatient and discourteous toward assistant district attorneys who appeared before her which created at least the appearance of bias against them.” In accepting the jointly recommended sanction of censure, the Commission noted that the

judge “acknowledged that her conduct was improper and warrants public discipline.”

Judge Semaj has been a Justice of the Supreme Court, 12<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, since 2022, having previously served as a Judge of the New York City Civil Court, Bronx County, from 2019 to 2021. Her current term expires on December 31, 2035.

### **Statement by Commission Administrator**

Commission Administrator Robert H. Tembeckjian made the following statement.

“The unseemly and repeated criticism of prosecutors is inconsistent with the duty of judges to be patient, dignified and courteous, toward all with whom they deal in an official capacity, as well as to avoid bias or the appearance of bias. The Commission expects that Judge Semaj will be more sensitive to these obligations now and in the future.”

### **The Commission Proceedings**

Judge Semaj was served with a Formal Written Complaint dated January 21, 2025, containing one charge, and filed an Answer dated February 18, 2025.

On April 21, 2025, the Administrator of the Commission and Judge Semaj entered into an Agreed Statement of Facts, stipulating to the facts and sanction and waiving further submissions and oral argument.

The Commission accepted the Agreed Statement on May 1, 2025.

### **The Commission Determination**

The Commission filed a determination dated May 30, 2025, in which the 10 participating members concurred, and one (Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq.) did not participate.

**Court of Appeals Review**

The Commission transmitted its determination to the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, pursuant to Judiciary Law Section 44, subdivision 7. The Commission was notified on July 7, 2025, that Judge Semaj had received the determination. Consequently, the matter is now public.

A judge may either accept the Commission's determination or, within 30 days from receipt, make a written request to the Chief Judge for a review of the determination by the Court of Appeals.

Pursuant to Judiciary Law Section 44, subdivision 7, if Judge Semaj does not request review by the Court of Appeals, the Commission will censure her in accordance with the determination.

If a Commission determination is reviewed by the Court of Appeals, the Court may accept the determined sanction, impose a different sanction including admonition, censure or removal, or impose no sanction.

**Statistics Relating to Prior Determinations**

Since 1978, the Commission has issued 357 determinations of censure against judges in New York State. The Commission has issued 185 determinations of removal and 289 determinations of admonition.

The Commission has accepted 153 permanent resignation stipulations, in which the judge has agreed to leave office and never seek or accept judicial office in the future, since the procedure was instituted in 2003.

The Court of Appeals has reviewed 102 Commission determinations. The results are available on the Commission's website at "[Appealed Decisions](#)."

**Counsel**

In the proceedings before the Commission, Judge Semaj represented herself.

The Commission was represented by Deputy Administrator Mark Levine, Senior Attorney Eric Arnone and Investigator Hamza Khan.

**Background Information on Judge Semaj**

First Took Office (Supreme Court): January 1, 2022  
 Prior Judicial Office (NYC Civil Court): January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2021  
 Current Term Expires: December 31, 2035  
 Year Admitted to the NYS Bar: 2006

**Members of the Commission**

The Commission members serve four-year terms. A list of members is noted below.

**The Public File**

The determination and other records are available on the Commission's website: [www.cjc.ny.gov](http://www.cjc.ny.gov).

**MEMBERS OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT**

Member	Appointing Authority	Term End
Joseph W. Belluck, Esq., Chair	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2028
Taa Grays, Esq., Vice Chair	Senate President Pro Tem Andrea Stewart-Cousins	March 31, 2027
Hon. Fernando M. Camacho	Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson	March 31, 2028
Stefano Cambareri, Esq.	Assembly Minority Leader William A. Barclay	March 31, 2029
Brian C. Doyle, Esq.	Senate Minority Leader Robert G. Ort	March 31, 2028
Hon. John A. Falk	Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson	March 31, 2029
Robin Chappelle Golston	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2029
Hon. Robert J. Miller	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2026
Nina M. Moore, Ph.D.	Governor Kathy Hochul	March 31, 2027
Hon. Peter H. Moulton	Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson	March 31, 2026
Marvin Ray Raskin, Esq.	Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie	March 31, 2026