



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pedro Espada Jr.

## Espada: Time to Stop Holding Judicial Pay Raise Political Hostage

PEDRO ESPADA, JR. February 23, 2010

| ISSUE: **JUDICIARY**

*Press Contact: Steve Mangione (cellular) 914-403-4072*

ALBANY—State Senate Majority Leader Pedro Espada, Jr. today said that wage increases for state judges should not be held political hostage to whether lawmakers receive a pay raise.

Sen. Espada said he agreed with today's 5-1 Court of Appeals ruling that chastises the Governor and state legislature for violating the Constitution by linking judicial salary to other non-related issues.

Sen. Espada also said he would fully support an immediate judicial pay raise, since state judges have not received a salary increase since January 1999.

The Court of Appeals ruling stems from a 2008 lawsuit filed by then-New York State Chief Judge Judith Kaye seeking a pay hike for state judges.

“Judicial pay matters because it impacts sitting, as well as potential, judges who know they can earn more in the private sector as associates at law firms and as deans and professors at law schools. To continue attracting high quality, cream-of-the-crop individuals, the state must pay judges commensurate with their experience and knowledge,” Sen. Espada continued.

“Other state employees receive pay raises independent of whether legislators receive a wage increase. Why should judges be treated any differently? There is no rationale for a judicial pay raise to be linked to the wage increase of state legislators. This is pure politics and it is unconstitutional. The rule of law is what differentiates a strong, functioning Democracy from corrupt, lawless nations,” Sen. Espada added.

#