Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris: Next Court Of Appeals Judge Should Come From Civil Rights, Immigration, Or Defense Background

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NEW YORK – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris wrote to the Commission on Judicial Nominations urging the body to expand upon the professional and personal backgrounds for people they recommend to the Governor for nominations to the New York State Court of Appeals.

"Court of Appeals judges must be defined by a lifetime of legal excellence, but that cannot be limited to people in just a few, select fields," said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris.** "For the Court to reflect the values of our entire state, its jurists should represent that excellence in different areas of the law and a commitment to serving others. I urge the Commission to think creatively about the professional lives and lived experiences of those who it recommends to New York's top court."

Recent nominees to the Court of Appeals have included prosecutors, corporate litigators, and people who have served as judges in lower courts. Senator Gianaris is urging the Commission to advance potential nominees who have a depth of professional experience beyond those fields, giving the Court of Appeals a broader professional and ideological spectrum. In his letter, Senator Gianaris suggests recommending candidates with backgrounds in public and indigent defense, immigration, housing, and civil rights matters.

Senator Gianaris also asked the Commission to seek out more opinions on candidates when making recommendations, soliciting greater public feedback from a variety of public interest organizations.

Court of Appeals judges serve 14-year terms when nominated by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate. Interested candidates apply to the Commission, which then vets applications, and presents the Governor with a list of qualified potential nominees for him or her to choose from.

Senator Gianaris' full letter can be found here.