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Give judges their overdue raises

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Remember all that hubbub about low pay for judges and the political wrangling it took to disconnect their salaries from those of legislators and some other state officials? While it has been out of the news for a while, it has been very much on the minds of those who have gone a dozen years without a raise. Now, the state's Commission on Judicial Compensation has recommended raises that would put New York's judges on a par with those of other states, a reasonable proposal that only looks unreasonable because they would be catching up with so many lost years.

Among those balking at the hefty raises is state Sen. John Bonacic, R-Mount Hope, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. He wants to get the figures down a bit, especially in light of the other sacrifices that so many New Yorkers have been asked to make.

While it's always nice to hear somebody in Albany trying to cut expenses, it would not be wise in this case. First of all, legislators were responsible for freezing judicial salaries for so long and need to take responsibility for that. Second, New York needs qualified people on the bench, and the comparatively low salaries are making that a hard goal to reach.

Judges in New York should be paid as well as their counterparts in other states. If legislators had not wasted so much time, these raises would not be so large.