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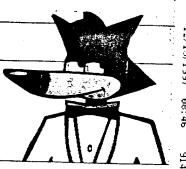
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O'Rourke nominated for state judgeshi

Westchester County exec expected to get Court of Claims post

By Ed Taglisferri

Westchester County Executive Andrew O'Rourke was nominated yesterday by Gov. George Pataki to be a judge in the state Court of Claims

The announcement signals the fulfillment of a career long dream of the Republican official to serve as a judge.

office after 15 years at the end of December, is likely to be approved by the Republican-controlled state Senate when it reconvenes in Janu-

"Andy O'Rourke has served the people of the state of New York and Westchester County with distinction for more than 32 years," Pataki said in a written statement. He was referring to O'Rourke's years on the Yonkers City Council and the Westchester County Board of Legislators.

"I am confident that he will great distinction in his new position O'Rourke, 64, who is leaving of public service," Pataki added.



Andrew Q'Rourke

hasn't practiced law since 1982, was rated "highly qualified," the state Judi-Committee. The committee interviewed and approved O'Rourke on Tuesday.

O'Rourke continue to serve the people with could not be reached for comment in 1992. yesterday. But in a written state-

"opportunity to continue serving the people of New York."

The position pays \$113,000, about \$6,000 less than he now earns. It has a term that runs through March 31, 2006. As a Court of Claims judge, O'Rourke would cial Screening hear lawsuits filed against the

The nomination comes six years after O'Rourke was nominated to the federal bench by President Bush. The nomination died in the Democratic-controlled U.S. Senate after Bush lost his re-election bid November and won full four year

O'Rourke has also sought a ment, he thanked Pataki for the statewide judgeship for the past race to Gov. Mario Cuomo.

two decades. He was either rebuffed by party leaders or vinced to seek re-election.

O'Rourke served on the Yor City Council from 1966 thru 1973, and the county legislafrom 1974 through 1982. He the board's chairman from 1978 through 1982.

He was appointed county executive in 1983, after Alfred DelBello resigned to become lieutenant gov-

He won a special election that terms in 1985, 1989 and 1993. O'Rourke lost the 1986 governor's

Earlier this year, he declined to seek re-election.

)'Rourke has a law degree from rdham Law School and a master's gree from New York University shool of Law. He is a captain in the udge Advocate General's Office and a rear admiral in the New York Naval Militia.

"He's got solid credentials as a practicing attorney, he's served in the legislature and as county executive. He has the perfect credentials to serve as a member of the judiciary," said state Sen. Nicholas Spano, R-Yonkers He said O'Rourke should gain swift confirmation in early Janu-