

March 12, 2014

Hon A. Gail Prudenti  
Chief Administrative Judge  
State of New York- Unified Court System  
25 Beaver Street  
New York, NY 10004

Dear Judge Prudenti:

Today is yet another in a long repetition of days in which the safety and security of the courts which we serve has been abrogated. In what has become a standard way of doing business for the judiciary in this state, Supreme Court parts have been ordered to operate without the presence of Court Officers. This undermines the very order with which the Courts are mandated to uphold. Despite many pleas and outcries this burgeoning epidemic continues and it must be addressed as I fear we are as close as ever before to a catastrophic incident from which we will never recover.

On this particular day, Manhattan Supreme Court Civil Term located at 80 Centre Street was undermanned. By all accounts, there were 14 officers present at the beginning of the day. As of 11:30 am there were at least 18 posts or parts to cover and that includes working below standard levels at the magnetometers. Our members have done everything in their capabilities to have this facility function properly. There are just not enough officers available. This is not an isolated incident. These types of problems arise every week and are growing. When one clerk did not feel safe opening the courtroom with upwards of 90 cases on the calendar, he was ordered by the Administrative judge to do so anyway. Security and safety have obviously taken a back seat and it is immeasurably distressing to all who serve this noble system.

I know that you are on record acknowledging the work and productivity we have contributed over these austere times, however we can no longer sit and wait for bureaucracy and rhetoric to untangle themselves. There must be an immediate solution to these troubling and dangerous issues. I am willing to work with any and

all involved in the decision making process to help protect all of the people who make this system work. There is too much at stake and our court family deserves better. Please contact me at your convenience, for I pledge myself and the organization I represent, to maintaining the strength of our courts in conjunction with you. Let us not find ourselves wishing we had in a rearview mirror. Let us work together to find a better solution for the people we are responsible for. I thank you for your consideration and await your response.

Sincerely ,

Patrick Cullen  
President  
SCOA

c: Hon. Jonathan Lippman  
Hon. Fern Fisher  
Hon. Lawrence Marks  
Eugene Myers  
Ronald P. Younkings  
Chief Joseph Amendola  
Chief Jewel McCollin  
Hon. Sherry Klein Heitler  
Maj. G. Fennell