



NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

One Elk Street, Albany, New York 12207 • 518.463.3200 • [www.nysba.org](http://www.nysba.org)

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**RICHARD C. LEWIS, ESQ.**

President

Hinman Howard & Kattell, LLP

80 Exchange Street PO Box 5250

Binghamton, NY 13901-3400

(607) 231-6891

[rlewis@hhk.com](mailto:rlewis@hhk.com)

July 31, 2023

The Honorable Kathy Hochul

Governor of New York State

NYS Capitol Building

Albany, NY 12224

*Re: NYSBA Support for A7691/S1163A*

Dear Governor Hochul:

The New York State Bar Association (NYSBA) supports A7691 (Solanges)/S1163A (Sanders), which would establish the New York State Community Commission on Reparations Remedies. This legislation is supported by NYSBA [via a report](#) of the Task Force on Racism, Social Equity and the Law.

As documented throughout the Task Force on Racism, Social Equity and Law's report, the result of decades of segregation, and policies and processes – including but not limited to redlined communities; health deserts; polluted neighborhoods where residents cannot safely drink the water nor breathe the air; disproportionate educational opportunities; and over policing communities of color that have limited essential opportunities – have caused a racial wealth gap. The wealth gap starts at birth with nearly 73% of poor children in America being children of color. As a result, in New York State, while white families only represent 60% of the families in New York State, they account for nearly 71% of family income.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, a disproportionate number of families of color in New York State live in poverty or are low income.

This legislation to establish a Community Commission on Reparations Remedies would result in the study of appropriate actions that should be taken to attempt to close New York's racial wealth gap for descendants of American slaves in our State. Such Commission should be reflective of

<sup>1</sup> Melanie Hanson, *Student Loan Debt by Race*, EducationData, Dec. 12, 2021, <https://educationdata.org/student-loan-debt-by-race>

New York's great diversity of race, ethnicity, culture, thought, geography, and socio-economic background. The attached report from the NYSBA Task Force on Racism, Social Equity and the Law provides a detailed overview of the history of racist policies in our country and state, as well as providing some recommendations for appropriate remedies (pgs. 77-80).

Based on the foregoing, as well as the [Task Force on Racism, Social Equity and the Law report](#), the New York State Bar Association respectfully requests that you approve A7691/S1163-A. I welcome the opportunity to discuss this legislation, along with any questions your office may have regarding the attached task force's report. Please do not hesitate to contact me or our General Counsel David Miranda, who can be reached at [dmiranda@nysba.org](mailto:dmiranda@nysba.org), 518-487-5524.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard C. Lewis".

Richard C. Lewis  
President, NYSBA

cc: Liz Fine, Esq.