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July 9, 2024

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
NYS Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

*Re: NYSBA Support for S9839(Hoylman-Sigal)/A10540(Dais)*

Dear Governor Hochul:

The New York State Bar Association supports this bill which would increase the number of Family Court judges throughout the state as well as increase the number of judges of the Civil Court of the City of New York.

The New York State Bar Association's Committee on Families and the Law's 2022 Report provided a number of recommendations for improving the family court system, including increasing the number of Family Court judges.<sup>1</sup>

Family Courts in particular are among those that continue with high volumes of cases, but fewer resources to hear those cases. Delays in processing a family court case can result in permanent damage to children, particularly when those delays impact family reunification. If a child is removed from their home before a judge rules on the agency's petition ("makes a finding"), the family is entitled to an expedited hearing to seek the return of their child. Because of court congestion, these hearings sometimes take weeks or even months to resolve, trapping the child in foster care for the duration. If a child is removed from his or her home after the Court finds the parent guilty of neglect, the family has no recourse to an expedited hearing and hearings can take up to half a year to resolve.

Increasing the number of family court judges will allow the courts to provide more expedited and meaningful access to justice for families.

<sup>1</sup> [Committee-on-Families-and-the-Law-April-2022-approved.pdf \(nysba.org\)](https://www.nysba.org/committees/committees-on-families-and-the-law/committees-on-families-and-the-law-april-2022-approved.pdf)

Based on the foregoing, as well as an attached report, the New York State Bar Association **SUPPORTS** this legislation and urges that it be signed into law. We welcome the opportunity to meet with the Chamber to discuss S9839/A10540 and address any questions your office may have regarding this legislation or the attached report. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or NYSBA's 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 "Domenick Napoletano".

Domenick Napoletano  
President, NYSBA

Cc: Liz Fine, Esq.