

Experts Comment on The Justice Index

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**I. Martha Bergmark, Executive Director, Voices for Civil Justice
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“The *Justice Index* is an exciting breakthrough for civil legal aid. For the first time, there is a readily accessible, easy-to-use resource for policy makers, court officials, and civil justice advocates to gauge the progress we’ve made in advancing fairness in the justice system. The *Justice Index* holds tremendous potential for expanding our understanding of which state models work and how we can improve access to civil justice to help people protect their livelihoods, their health, and their families.”

**II. Bert Brandenburg, Executive Director, Justice at Stake
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“The new *Justice Index* is a unique and vital tool that will help states strengthen their commitment to ensuring access to justice for all. The data is rich, and the site is user-friendly. It allows users to view information in multiple ways that provide additional insight into courts’ current strengths, as well as those areas in which new accessibility goals can be set. We applaud the work done by the National Center for Access to Justice to help our state courts continue to function as the bedrock on which flourishing local economies and communities are built.”

**III. Bruce J. Gitlin, Founder and Executive Director, New York Center for Law and Justice
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“The picture of policy in the 50 states, as presented by the Justice Index, is terrific in letting disability advocates like us immediately see where best court practices are in place, or missing, for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. The *Justice Index* let's us see where reform is needed.”

**IV. Raun Rasmussen, Executive Director, Legal Services for New York City
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“Access to justice is denied daily to millions of people throughout our country simply because they cannot afford a lawyer, cannot speak English well, or have disabilities that prevent them from navigating the courts. The *Justice Index* provides a remarkable opportunity to identify those states that have the most work to do, and to learn from those states that are getting it right. For those who care about fundamental fairness, the Justice Index is a powerful tool for change.”

**V. James R. Silkenat, President, American Bar Association, Attorney at Law, Sullivan & Worcester LLP
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“The new Justice Index meets a real need. It provides, on a state-by-state basis, the same kind of impartial analysis on access to justice issues that the World Justice Project’s Rule of Law Index provides for countries internationally. It shows where the most serious gaps exist and points the way to remedying those gaps in the future.”

**VI. McGregor Smyth, Executive Director, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
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“At New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, where we advocate for marginalized New Yorkers such as people with limited English proficiency or disabilities, the Justice Index will be an important advocacy tool for comparing state policies and determining whether people can count on the courts. Courts play a vital role in enforcing civil rights, and we see the *Justice Index* as a roadmap that can help everyone understand where improvement is needed and how it can be achieved based on models already accepted in neighboring states.”

**VII. Jo-Ann Wallace, President and CEO, National Legal Aid & Defender Association
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“In our work, we recognize the importance of using data to help the public understand the importance of access to quality representation in civil and criminal matters, and to aid in our advocacy for a fair, effective justice system. We see the development of the *Justice Index* by the National Center for Access to Justice as a breakthrough tool.”

**VIII. Richard Zorza, Founder, Self Represented Litigants Network
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“The *Justice Index* is transformative. It moves us from an often-dead end discussion about the access crisis to the possibility of a specific and concrete discussion of what needs to be done and where. This is a very important milestone.”

[March 3, 2014]