

INTRODUCTION TO THE 2025-2026 EDITION

Many thanks once again this year to Housing Court Judge Sergio Jimenez for his Views from the Bench, which add an enormously important perspective to this book. I highly value his friendship and collaboration. Much gratitude also to Kimberly Skadan and Nakeeb Siddique of the Legal Aid Society, whose weekly comprehensive case summaries are an invaluable resource for my annual update. Suggestions for the book are always welcome and this year I thank Michael Ballman, Esq. and Allison Dentinger, Esq. of the Hudson Valley Justice Center for theirs.

The pace of change in landlord-tenant law in New York continues to accelerate. Because of the not-yet-fully-implemented right to counsel for tenants who face eviction in New York City, a new right to counsel law in Westchester County, and increased state funding for eviction prevention, far more tenants are represented in eviction cases than ever before. The Good Cause Eviction Law (GCEL) is providing greater protection for covered tenants in New York City and an increasing number of localities around the state are adopting GCEL and Rent Stabilization. All this is providing fertile ground for litigation and keeping the judiciary busy. Trial judges and the appellate courts are issuing more judicial opinions interpreting and refining our understanding of the law each year, which makes the job of updating this volume more challenging, yet more rewarding.

But this year is not like previous years. The current president and his administration are implementing and threatening to implement federal policies that will have a profoundly damaging effect on housing rights and housing affordability in New York and throughout the country. Federal funding for rent subsidies, public housing and housing development are slated for devastating cuts. Other, non-housing policies affecting health care, immigration, food security, employment and the like will drive more New Yorkers into poverty and increase evictions and homelessness. Proposed cuts to federal legal services funding will deprive low-income people of access to the justice system and compound their difficulties. And these housing and housing-related policies are just one part of an overarching approach that is redistributing wealth upward; threatening the rule of law, free speech, and due process; normalizing cruelty and bias; and undermining science, our common understanding of history, and truth itself. The importance of recognizing, calling out and resisting these devastating and regressive policies cannot be overstated. I dedicate this year's volume to the growing numbers of people who are taking action to defend democracy and constitutional, civil and human rights, protect social and economic rights, and resist totalitarianism and oppression.

Andrew Scherer
2025

I continue to be grateful to Professor Scherer who has created such an excellent resource for the community. This project helps me grow as someone intricately tied to the law and, in the best way possible, forces me to learn the latest law coming out all over the state.

As I now enter my third year of writing the Views from the Bench, I do want to acknowledge colleagues and friends who help make me both a better judge and person on a daily basis – Judges Bacdayan, Basu, Weisberg, Golden, Ibrahim, Guthrie, Schiff, Stoller, Chinae and Poley. This cadre of brilliant minds has had a significant effect on my professional life.

Mi Chau, my court attorney, is an integral part of my courtroom and her effect on my running a courtroom cannot be understated, I am grateful she applied for the position and remains one of the best decisions I have made as a judge.

Every year I cannot thank Meghan, Casey, Henry and Elena enough for taking care of me and teaching me so much. My heart grows sizes merely writing their names.

Hon. Sergio Jimenez
2025