



NEW YORK CITY LAW DEPARTMENT
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**CITY LAW DEPARTMENT STRENGTHENS EFFORT ON AFFIRMATIVE SUITS,
IMPACT LITIGATION**

NEW YORK—The New York City Law Department today announced a new strategic advocacy initiative to expand the City’s social justice and impact litigation efforts. Two Law Department attorneys have been appointed to newly created positions and a department-wide committee has been formed to evaluate new lawsuits for the City.

“We are building on the Law Department’s 30 year legacy of initiating litigation to protect the City’s interests. The individuals we have appointed are uniquely qualified to strengthen our proactive litigation program and explore potential cases to affect positive change for New Yorkers,” **Corporation Counsel Zachary W. Carter** said.

Deputy Division Chief for Strategic Litigation

Tonya Jenerette, a Senior Counsel in the Law Department’s Affirmative Litigation Division, has been promoted to the new position of Deputy Chief of Strategic Litigation within that Division. She will be a member of and work closely with the Strategic Advocacy Committee, a new working group comprised of members of the Law Department’s executive staff, division chiefs and senior attorneys from a cross-section of divisions, as well as a representative from the Mayor’s Office. The Committee will review emerging issues and evaluate the viability of potential social justice and impact litigation. Jenerette will direct, manage and supervise cases arising out of the Committee’s work.

As part of the Affirmative Litigation Division, Jenerette has worked on the recent suit brought against opioid manufacturers and distributors and was part of the trial team against United Parcel Service in which a judge awarded the City and State \$247 million for the illegal shipment of cigarettes. Jenerette has also served as a Senior Counsel in the Law Department’s Special Federal Litigation Division where she worked on major litigation arising out of protest activities during the 2004 Republican National Convention and on Stop, Question and Frisk litigations. She began her career as a litigation associate at the law firms of Cravath, Swaine & Moore and O’Melveny & Myers and has served as senior enforcement attorney with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Federal Reserve Bank of

New York. Jenerette was an adjunct professor at Fordham Law School and a lecturer at New York University School of Law, where she received her J.D.

Ms. Jenerette said, “I am excited to work with our new Strategic Advocacy Committee to continue the Law Department’s work in bringing litigation that advances the interests of the City in promoting social justice and impacting the quality of life of its residents.”

Senior Counsel for Strategic Advocacy

Kaitlin Caruso, a senior counsel in the Law Department’s Legal Counsel Division, will become Director of the Strategic Advocacy Committee. She will work with Committee members to evaluate suits and will interact with agencies, other jurisdictions, academics, and law firms to coordinate litigation. Prior to her work in Legal Counsel, Caruso worked as a consumer fraud litigator for the Illinois Attorney General and as a judicial law clerk for Judge Harry Leinenweber of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and then for Judge William Kayatta Jr. of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. She has worked on a variety of consumer protection, civil rights and affirmative litigation projects and most recently served as Special Counsel in the Mayor's Office. She received her J.D. from Yale Law School.

Ms. Caruso said she is “honored to be part of this new initiative, especially at a time when local engagement is more critical than ever.”

Examples of recent suits brought by various Law Department Divisions:

- **Affirmative Litigation** filed a lawsuit against opioid manufacturers and distributors to recover the costs of the opioid epidemic in the City; brought suit against the Department of Defense for failure to report mandated records to the FBI background check system; and has focused on addressing the public health consequences of the sale and delivery of untaxed cigarettes, through litigation to enjoin and penalize such practices, successfully suing internet sellers, reservation sellers and others involved with the sale and delivery of untaxed cigarettes. The Division has also partnered with the New York State Attorney General’s Office in an action against United Parcel Service, obtaining a judgment of nearly \$250 million in damages and penalties for the company’s illegal shipment of untaxed cigarettes into New York. Ongoing litigation includes the City’s similar suit against FedEx for delivering untaxed cigarettes.
- **Environmental Law** filed a lawsuit against five of the larger fossil fuel producers to recover the City’s costs of protecting the City and its residents from the impacts of climate change; has participated with states and other municipalities in litigation to regulate and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollution, including the landmark Supreme Court decision concluding that greenhouse gases were a pollutant and subject to regulation by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; obtained more than \$115 million from ExxonMobil and other gasoline producers for the costs of removing a gasoline additive from City groundwater wells in Queens; and has brought more than 40 cases to protect the sources of the City’s upstate drinking water supply from pollution.
- **Administrative Law** initiated a case to ensure that the ridesharing service Lyft utilized licensed drivers and vehicles in the City; and preserved one of the City’s oldest buildings, a property

constructed in 1680 and known as the Manee-Seguine Homestead in Staten Island, through a lawsuit compelling the owners to maintain the landmarked property or pay a substantial monetary judgment.

Tracing its roots back to the 1600s, the New York City Law Department is one of the oldest and most dynamic legal offices in the world, ranking among New York City's largest law offices and the country's largest public law offices. Led by Corporation Counsel Zachary W. Carter, the Department's 885 attorneys represent the City on a vast array of civil litigation, legislative and legal issues, and in the criminal prosecution of juveniles, encompassing a caseload of 70,000 active or ongoing legal matters each year in 16 legal divisions. The Corporation Counsel heads the Law Department and acts as legal counsel for the Mayor, elected officials, the City, and all its agencies. For more information, visit the Law Department's website at www.nyc.gov/law