



THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
BRONX COUNTY

ROBERT T. JOHNSON

November 25, 2015

Frederick A.O. Schwarz, Jr., Chair
Quadrennial Advisory Commission for the
Review of Compensation Levels for Elected Officials
c/o Brennan Center for Justice
161 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10013

Dear Chairman Schwarz:

I received your letter of November 3, asking for some details about my job, "beyond the formalities" of my duties and responsibilities. In response, I will attempt to provide some details beyond what is set forth in the joint letter which you have already received.

To begin, please understand that the position of District Attorney is a full time job. That is, there is no outside legal practice. In response to your question concerning the amount of time I spend on official business, it is quite difficult to quantify, in a very real sense. My fellow District Attorneys and I are always on duty, and we are often consulted at length, or even called out, at all hours of the day in high-profile situations, such as police shootings. I am available in the office beyond what is considered to be a normal work week, plus an hour or two of reading at home per day, plus frequent attendance at community meetings and events, as well as meetings with police and other governmental organizations.

You also ask about the most challenging parts of the job, again, this is difficult to specify. My duties are multifaceted. First, every day, I must make prosecutorial decisions in the most difficult cases- what to charge or not to charge, whether to allow a treatment alternative to incarceration, what plea to offer or accept, etc. Sometimes I must explain those decisions to the press, or to the families of crime victims. In addition to that, I must organize and coordinate my office's relationship with elected officials and outside agencies at all levels of government, as well as with non-governmental groups or organizations. I also run an office of nearly 900 people, and in that capacity must make varied personnel decisions, involving issues like raises, complaints between staff members, and the personal problems of staff members.

I am sure that the above is not complete, but I hope it gives you some additional insight. I know that the joint letter pointed out that the last Quadrennial Advisory Commission issued its report in late 2006 and recommended that the next Commission should be appointed in 2011, as required by statute. Of course, that did not happen. Indeed, by my calculation in my 27 years as District Attorney the Commission has been convened only three times (in 1995, 1999, and 2006). I am glad to see that this is happening at last.

Thank you, and please let me know if there is anything else I can do.

Very truly yours,