

**A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY
LEGISLATOR BASKIN**

Re: Appointment of Commissioner of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority

WHEREAS, New York State Public Authorities Law, Section 1299-c, provides that among the ten members of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (“NFTA”) Board of Commissioners, one member shall be appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of the Erie County Legislature, subject to State Senate confirmation; and

WHEREAS, the term of the current Commissioner recommended by the Erie County Legislature, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate expired in June 2016; and

WHEREAS, Treneeka Cusack Fields has expressed a desire to be the Legislature’s recommendation to the Governor, offering solid credentials and a deep commitment to our region, as well as energy and enthusiasm for the appointment; and

WHEREAS, as an attorney, Ms. Fields possesses an exceptional understanding of complex matters, enabling her to excel as a member of the governing board of the NFTA; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Fields recognizes that our public transportation system is a critical asset for workforce development and improving the lives of our residents through allowing them to access jobs, education, and cultural and other quality-of-life activities and she is committed to working to help improve the public’s access to public transit, as well as NFTA accountability.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature respectfully requests the Governor to appoint Treneeka Cusack Fields (18 Greenboro Court, Amherst, NY 14051), as a member of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority Board of Commissioners representing the Erie County Legislature; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution shall be transmitted to the Governor of New York; the Majority Leader of the New York State Senate, the local delegation of the New York State Senate, the Chair and Secretary of the NFTA Board of Commissioners.

Fiscal Impact: None.

TRENEEKA CUSACK FIELDS

PROFILE

Experienced attorney admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court, April 2018. Admitted to practice in New York State since February 2006, with a strong background in public interest law including child welfare, predatory lending and mortgage foreclosure prevention.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Buffalo, NY

Staff Attorney, Attorneys for Children Unit

December 2006 – Present

- Represent and defend children in the Erie County Family Court system whose parents have been charged with neglect and/or abuse by the Erie County Department of Social Services.
- Prepare and conduct trials and in-camera hearings on neglect/abuse, custody/visitation cases.
- Represent and defend children under Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) and Juvenile Delinquents (JD) petitions, allegations ranging from misdemeanor to violent felonies.
- Conduct investigations, interview children, supervise social workers and investigators.
- Draft motions and responsive pleadings to motions, memorandum of law and summations.
- Principle Attorney for Children whose parents participated in the Erie County Family Treatment Court, maintaining a caseload of over 300 children.

Attorney, Civil Unit (Part-Time)

January 2006 – December 2006

- Represented indigent persons victimized by predatory loans and fraudulent flipping schemes.
- Testified before the New York State Assembly's Committee on Consumer Affairs and Protection about the effects predatory lending has on the Western New York community.
- Drafted pleadings, affidavits and renegotiated mortgage terms for loan modification.

National Labor Relations Board, Grand Rapids, MI

Extern

May 2004 – August 2004

- Wrote recommendations to the regional director including assessment and viability of cases.
- Reviewed documents and assisted with trial preparation.
- Examined employer materials regarding production numbers for stipulation purposes to determine if further investigation was appropriate.

End Violent Encounters (EVE), Inc., Lansing MI

Domestic Violence Victim Advocate

March 2002 – July 2004

- Petitioned the Ingham County Family Court for Personal Protection Orders on behalf of victims of domestic violence and drafted show-cause motions.
- Drafted grant proposal abstract for local Family Justice Center
- Trained and supervised students and volunteers in assisting victims of interpersonal violence.
- Maintained communications with judges, attorneys, court personnel, and law enforcement on behalf of victims who were not able to speak for themselves.

Erie County Family Court

Court Clerk

September 1999 – August 2000

- Responsible for tracking foster care cases that went beyond statutory limitations on the Juvenile Tracking System (JTS) and managed case files involving children placed in foster care.

EDUCATION

Thomas M. Cooley Law School

Juris Doctor

September 2004

- Concentration in Administrative Law
- Class Rank: Top 20%
- Dean's List
- Editorial Board, Thomas M. Cooley Journal of Practical and Clinical Law
- Student Advisor, Thomas M. Cooley Honor Counsel
- Domestic Violence Advocate

Virginia Commonwealth University

Master of Science in Criminal Justice

May 1998

LeMoyne College

Bachelor of Arts in Sociology

May 1995

- Co-Chair, LeMoyne Student Counseling Committee
- Co-Chair, LeMoyne Student Activities Programming Board

ASSOCIATIONS

Erie County Bar Association

February 2006 - Present

Erie County Bar Foundation, Bar Association of Erie County

Treasurer

June 2019 – June 2020

Board of Directors

June 2014 – June 2019

Minority Bar Association of Western New York

February 2006 – Present

Co-Chair – Judicial Ratings Committee

February 2021 – Present

Recording Secretary

January 2020 – December 2020

Women Lawyers of Western New York

May 2009 – Present

President

January 2012 – December 2012

Vice President

January 2011 – December 2011

Board of Directors

May 2009 – January 2011

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Western New York Veterans Housing Coalition

Board of Directors

July 2017 – November 2019

Center for Elder Law and Justice

Board of Directors

March 2012 – March 2018

Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo

Board of Directors, Employee Member

January 2012 – December 2014

Unlimited Possibilities Overcoming Poverty Ministry, Inc.

Celebrating Women Touching The World Award

March 2014

SKILLS

Proficient in Lexis-Nexis research, Microsoft: Word, Access, Excel and Social Media