U.S. Department of Justice

Executive Office for Immigration Review

Office of the Director

Director

5107 Leesburg Pike, Suite 2600
Falls Church, Virginia 22041

September 21, 2007

Mr. Thomas Fayer
Letters Editor
Letters to the Editor
The New York Times
620 Eighth Avenue
New York, New York 10018

Dear Editor:

Nina Bernstein's September 20 article, "Judge Who Chastised Weeping Asylum Seeker is Taken Off Case," involves a case that the immigration judge decided in 2004. Since that time, the Department of Justice has instituted reforms to address the very concerns raised in the article. For example, we have published proposed codes of judicial conduct, developed new judicial training programs, emphasized the need for professionalism, and appointed a senior official to oversee all judicial misconduct allegations.

The vast majority of immigration judges conduct themselves in an exemplary manner and are models of judicial professionalism. For those few who fail to meet this standard, we now are committed to taking action to address the problem. Specifically, as appropriate, we will provide additional individualized training, administer counseling, or impose discipline – to include, if warranted, removal from the bench. Everyone who appears in immigration court deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

Sincerely,

Kevin A. Ohlson
Director