

PROBATION OFFICERS' APPEAL CHALLENGES JUDICIARY'S PRACTICE

The Probation Association of New Jersey has appealed a Mercer County court ruling regarding the judiciary's right to remove or effectively demote probation officers. The union for the more than 2,800 probation officers and supervisors in all 21 counties claims Judge Paulette M. Sapp-Peterson's ruling in *State of New Jersey v. Probation Association* allows for the removal of officers without cause or a hearing in violation of its collective bargaining agreement with the judiciary. The state argued such action complies with the agreement and accuses the union of "trying to gain through litigation what it could not achieve through negotiation." In the underlying case, Sapp-Peterson denied the union's request for a hearing into the demotion of a Bergen County probation supervisor. Benjamin Benson of Fox and Fox in Livingston represents the union, and Deputy Attorney General Karen M. Selby represents the state. 7-27-05