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Panel probing big-spending judge

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The state's judicial watchdog is investigating Judge Luis Gonzalez, whose patronage mil
The state Commission on Judicial Conduct has launched a probe into Gonzalez, the pre
Appellate Division First Department, a court source told The Post.

The investigation comes after The Post reported that Gonzalez called two homes his pri
of rent regulations and tax breaks, and stuffed the court with questionable hires, sparkin

The bloated staffing sent the First Department's annual budget into the red by nearly \$40
-- the Brooklyn-based Second Department -- to kick in cash, a source told The Post.

The overspending comes at a time when the state court system is facing budget cuts of
Gonzalez hired his ex-wife as a \$65,000-a-year clerk. Also hired under his watch were h
executive assistant's nephew and the son of a court security officer who used to be his c
court experience.

Gonzalez insisted to The Post that he moved from a home he owns in Brooklyn to a rent
January 2009.

But Gonzalez took out a federally insured mortgage in February 2009 on his Williamsbur
residence. Lying on a credit application for such a loan is a federal crime.

Gonzalez did not respond to a request for comment.

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