U.S. District Judge Sounds Off on Law Firms' High Billing Rates

The invisible hand of the free market hasn't been able to exert much control over law firm billing rates, U.S. District Judge Jed S. Rakoff said at a Cardozo School of Law panel discussion about the high cost of the legal system, **reports Bloomberg Law**.

Rakoff cited a 2016 report that showed average hourly rates for partners rose from $122 in 1985 to $532 in 2012, as average associates rates grew from $79 to $370.

Reporter **Rebecca Beyer** quotes Rakoff as asking: "Why isn't the free market operating?" The answer, he said, lies in the fact that the legal profession operates much like a guild, with "substantial barriers to entry," not least of which is the cost of a legal education.

Read the Bloomberg article.

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