

Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewidth.org>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 1:41 PM
To: 'dibernar@nysenate.gov'; 'investigations@nysenate.gov'
Subject: This Legislature's uncertified FY2020-21 budget is even MORE FRAUDULENT & LARCENOUS than for FY2019-20 -- & IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION by the Senate Committee on Investigations & Gov't Operations is MANDATED
Attachments: 2-19-18-written-testimony-with-questions-24pp-compressed.pdf

TO: Sara DiBernardo/Counsel to Senator James Skoufis

This follows up our phone conversation two days ago, on Wednesday, January 29, 2020, in which you stated that the matters I had presented last year for investigation by Senator Skoufis and the Senate Committee on Investigations and Government Operations he chairs were “not within the jurisdiction” of the Committee and that you “couldn’t substantiate” them.

As these are outright lies – obvious from the most cursory examination of my four e-mails to Chairman Skoufis and the Committee, dated January 10, 2019, January 22, 2019, January 24, 2019, and March 4, 2019 – I repeatedly urged you to review them with me, as we spoke, from CJA’s webpage posting them: <http://www.judgewidth.org/web-pages/searching-nys/2019-legislative/2019-senate-comm-investig-govt-ops.htm>. You declined.

Our conversation was interrupted because you had a 3 pm meeting. Yesterday, at about 3:45 pm, I called back to speak with you, leaving a voice message at the Albany office (518-455-3290). I then called the Newburg office (845-567-1270) and left a message with Juanita. At Juanita’s suggestion, I then called the Rockland office (845-786-6710) to speak with Elisha, the Legislative Director. As I recollect, no one picked up. Today, at about noon, I called the Newburg office again – and spoke with Chris, who suggested that I e-mail you.

As I stated to Chris and Juanita, I am following up with you, as a courtesy, to give you an opportunity to retract your falsehoods that the Committee has “no jurisdiction” with respect to the matters presented by my e-mails – and “couldn’t substantiate [them]”.

Time is of the essence. Please call me, first thing on Monday morning to discuss – beginning with the Committee’s “jurisdiction” over the Legislature’s *own* budget, indeed, its constitutional role, pursuant to Article VII, §1 of the New York State Constitution, as the “appropriate committee” responsible for the “itemized estimates of the financial needs” of the Senate that the Temporary Senate President is required to then certify. Suffice to say, the Legislature’s uncertified budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 is even more FRAUDULENT and LARCENOUS than was its uncertified budget for the current fiscal year – and this requires IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION BY THE COMMITTEE.

Below, with its above attachment, is my March 4, 2019 e-mail to Chairman Skoufis and the Committee focused on the Legislature’s budget for this fiscal year and the Governor’s combined legislative/judiciary budget bill. What were the Committee’s answers to my 27 QUESTIONS concerning these – especially “QUESTIONS ##10-15 pertaining to the role of the Senate Committee on Investigations and Government Operations and of the Assembly Committee on Governmental Operations in compiling the Legislature’s ‘itemized estimates’ of its ‘financial needs’ – including of all committees and legislator offices.”

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>

Sent: Monday, March 4, 2019 1:54 PM

To: 'skoufis@nysenate.gov' <skoufis@nysenate.gov>; 'mazzarie@nysenate.gov' <mazzarie@nysenate.gov>; 'anagnost@nysenate.gov' <anagnost@nysenate.gov>; 'mike_2233@yahoo.com' <mike_2233@yahoo.com>; 'carlosv845@gmail.com' <carlosv845@gmail.com>; 'dibernar@nysenate.gov' <dibernar@nysenate.gov>; 'reichlin@nysenate.gov' <reichlin@nysenate.gov>; 'goddard@nysenate.gov' <goddard@nysenate.gov>; 'jacobs@nysenate.gov' <jacobs@nysenate.gov>; 'jshapiro@nysenate.gov' <jshapiro@nysenate.gov>; 'biaggi@nysenate.gov' <biaggi@nysenate.gov>; 'jonesjj@nysenate.gov' <jonesjj@nysenate.gov>; 'sepulveda@nysenate.gov' <sepulveda@nysenate.gov>; 'shantaleemz@gmail.com' <shantaleemz@gmail.com>; 'kaminsky@nysenate.gov' <kaminsky@nysenate.gov>; 'bchristi@nysenate.gov' <bchristi@nysenate.gov>; 'lanza@nysenate.gov' <lanza@nysenate.gov>; 'bmorin@nysenate.gov' <bmorin@nysenate.gov>; 'carlucci@nysenate.gov' <carlucci@nysenate.gov>; 'coffin@nysenate.gov' <coffin@nysenate.gov>

Subject: Agenda Request for the Next Meeting of the Senate Committee on Investigations & Government Operations: The Legislature's OWN budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 & the Governor's Budget Bill #S.1501/A.2001

TO: Senate Committee on Investigations & Government Operations

Senator James Skoufis/Chair
Senator Christopher Jacobs, Esq./Ranking Member
Senator Alessandra Biaggi, Esq.
Senator Luis Sepulveda, Esq.
Senator Todd Kaminsky, Esq.
Senator Andrew Lanza, Esq.
Senator David Carlucci

What is the status of your investigations of my January 10, 2019 e-mail, setting forth the “problem” of government dysfunction and corruption, affecting all three government branches – and its “solution” – which I sent to every member of the Committee on January 22nd and then supplemented, on January 24th, with an e-mail entitled “OVERSIGHT OF SENATE & ASSEMBLY LEADERSHIP – Willful Violations of Legislative Law Article 5-A and Article 5-B Rendering the 14 Joint Legislative Commissions Sham”.

For your convenience, these three e-mails are posted on CJA’s website, www.judgewatch.org, accessible *via* the center link for the “2019 Legislative Session”. This leads to a menu of webpages, including for the Senate Committee on Investigations and Government Operations. The direct link is here: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/searching-nys/2019-legislative/2019-senate-comm-investig-govt-ops.htm>.

As a further supplement for the Committee’s investigation into government operations – beginning with the Legislature’s **own** operations, attached is my February 19, 2019 written testimony submitted for the Legislature’s February 11, 2019 budget hearing on “local government officials/general government”. It appends a list of 27 QUESTIONS about the Legislature’s proposed budget for fiscal year 2019-2020 and Governor Cuomo’s Legislative/Judiciary Budget Bill #S.1501/A.2001 and requests that the Legislature’s fiscal committees secure answers from former Temporary Senate President Flanagan, Temporary Senate President Stewart-Cousins, and Assembly Speaker Heastie. Will the Senate Committee on Investigations and Government Operations – two of whose seven members sit on the Senate Finance Committee – endorse this request? Or will it answer the 27 QUESTIONS, on its own – and make the answers public? This would include QUESTIONS ##10-15 pertaining to the role of the Senate Committee on Investigations and Government Operations and of the Assembly Committee on Governmental Operations in compiling the Legislature’s “itemized estimates” of its “financial needs” – including of all committees and legislator offices. **By this e-mail, I request that such be placed on the agenda of the Committee’s next meeting for discussion and vote.**

For the convenience of all, the 27 QUESTIONS about the Legislature's proposed budget, etc. are most easily accessed from CJA's webpage for the February 19, 2019 written testimony, here: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/searching-nys/2019-legislative/feb-19-2019-written-testimony.htm>, which additionally posts links for the referred-to budget documents for fiscal year 2019-2020.

I am available to assist you, to the max, in discharging your constitutional responsibilities to the People of the State of New York. Such are not remotely discharged by the Committee's first three meetings of the 2019 legislative session – on January 14th, February 5th, and February 27th – the videos and agendas for which the Committee posts on its own website: <https://www.nysenate.gov/committees/investigations-and-government-operations> – which touts the Committee as “Proactively investigating and exposing waste, fraud, and abuse; working to exercise effective oversight over our state government.”

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
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