

Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 10:07 AM
To: 'phillip.pantuso@chronogram.com'; 'tips@therivernewsroom.com';
'community@therivernewsroom.com'
Subject: STATUS -- & Lissa Harris' email address: Local Journalism -- & the 2020 state legislative races in Ulster, Orange, Dutchess, & Columbia Counties -- & in NYS' 68 other counties
Attachments: ulster-6-19-20-complaint-clegg.pdf; ulster-signature.pdf; ulster-7-30-20-da-foil.pdf

TO: Managing Editor Phillip Pantuso/The River-Hudson Valley Newsroom

Your below October 10th e-mail – responding to mine -- stated: “Regarding your story tip, I'm the best person to contact about that. I'm intrigued about this ‘single, fully-documented story of fraud and larceny involving the state legislators' own salaries & the Legislature's own budget,’ but I need to know more information, as that is clearly a pretty major allegation. Can you tell me more?”

What was the outcome of your review of the EVIDENCE that I then re-sent you, from September 20th, in response – and which I topped off with an additional October 20th e-mail, with substantiating EVIDENTIARY links, entitled “The larger, state-wide election story – of which the four counties of Ulster, Orange, Dutchess, and Columbia are part –”? **Is there anything that did not check out 100%?** I will forward you that additional BONUS October 20th e-mail, for your convenience in responding – and ask that you respond without delay.

Also, without delay, please furnish me with Lissa Harris' e-mail address so that I may communicate with her directly about the story – and about building the kind of electorally-essential “local journalism” that, apparently, The River is unwilling to provide. Did you share with her my e-mails, so that she could make her own independent judgment?

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
www.judgewatch.org
914-421-1200

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Saturday, October 10, 2020 1:08 PM
To: 'phillip.pantuso@chronogram.com' <phillip.pantuso@chronogram.com>

Subject: Thank you -- Status? -- Local Journalism -- & the 2020 elections for state legislators in Ulster, Orange, Dutchess, & Columbia Counties -- #1 (Ulster County)

Dear Philip –

Thank you for your e-mail. The politically-explosive story that I am presenting to you, for election coverage – and which is worth a huge amount of money for funding imperatively-needed “local journalism” and hiring a slew of laid-off seasoned journalists to develop it – is presented by the four e-mails I sent you pertaining to the state Senate and Assembly races in the four counties within The River's geographic reach – starting with Ulster County, below and above attached.

I will re-send you the e-mails pertaining to Orange, Dutchess, and Columbia Counties...

Please call me, at your convenience, as soon as possible, so that we can discuss The River's election reporting of the state Senate and Assembly races within those four counties.

Thank you.

Elena
914-421-1200

From: Phillip Pantuso <phillip.pantuso@chronogram.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 10, 2020 11:31 AM
To: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Subject: Re: Status? -- Local Journalism -- & the 2020 elections for state legislators in Ulster, Orange, Dutchess, & Columbia Counties -- #1 (Ulster County)

Hi Elena,

I'm sorry for the late reply, and thanks for reaching out. I'll confess to being a little confused by your initial email. Lissa is a staff writer here at The River, and since March she's been full-time on the coronavirus beat. She is not the person to contact concerning political or electoral coverage. As for her quest to fund local journalism—are you referring to the Watershed Post, the news site she and her partner ran and which she describes in her "Death of a Newspaper" piece? That site has not been active since 2017.

Regarding your story tip, I'm the best person to contact about that. I'm intrigued about this "single, fully-documented story of fraud and larceny involving the state legislators' own salaries & the Legislature's own budget," but I need to know more information, as that is clearly a pretty major allegation. Can you tell me more?

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Saturday, October 10, 2020 7:02 AM
To: 'phillip.pantuso@chronogram.com' <phillip.pantuso@chronogram.com>; 'tips@therivernewsroom.com' <tips@therivernewsroom.com>; 'community@therivernewsroom.com' <community@therivernewsroom.com>
Subject: Status? -- Local Journalism -- & the 2020 elections for state legislators in Ulster, Orange, Dutchess, & Columbia Counties -- #1 (Ulster County)

TO: Managing Editor Phillip Pantuso/The River-Hudson Valley Newsroom

I received no phone call from Lissa Harris. Did you apprise her of my request to speak with her as indicated by my below September 20th e-mail, to which, additionally, I received no response from you or anyone else. Please advise.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
www.judgewatch.org
914-421-1200

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

Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2020 4:42 AM

To: 'tips@therivernewsroom.com' <tips@therivernewsroom.com>; 'phillip.pantuso@chronogram.com' <phillip.pantuso@chronogram.com>; 'community@therivernewsroom.com' <community@therivernewsroom.com>

Subject: Local Journalism -- & the 2020 elections for state legislators in Ulster, Orange, Dutchess, & Columbia Counties -- #1 (Ulster County)

TO: The River-Hudson Valley Newsroom

I am director and co-founder of the non-partisan, non-profit citizens' organization, Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA), based in White Plains, New York.

I have just learned of you, *via* the important article by Lissa Harris, "[*Death of a Newspaper*](#)", which I stumbled upon through a google search for local journalism. I would like to speak with Ms. Harris directly about her quest to fund local journalism – and to support herself, as a journalist. Meantime, I have posted the article on CJA's webpage entitled: "**GOOD NEWS FOR THE PRESS** -- Reporting on the electoral races for NYS' 213 legislative seats, on NY's 15 D.A. races, & on congressional races involving NYS legislative incumbents is EASY. It ALL rests on a single, fully-documented story of fraud and larceny involving the state legislators' *own* salaries & the Legislature's *own* budget". The direct link is here: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/elections/2020/message-2020/good-news-message-for-press.htm>.

In that connection, as it appears that The River-Hudson Valley Newsroom's geographic reach are the four counties of Orange, Columbia, Ulster, and Dutchess ("the region from Newburgh to Hudson, from Woodstock to Beacon"), I will forward you the four materially-identical e-mails pertaining to 2020 election coverage of state legislative races in those four counties that I sent to such scant newspaper/press as I could find – using as my starting point the information for those counties in the "Expanding News Deserts" report of Penelope Abernathy: <https://www.usnewsdeserts.com/states/new-york/>, also posted on CJA's above webpage.

Since Ulster County has the greatest number of state legislative races – eight – including the seat to be vacated by Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Seward and the seat that Senate Committee on Investigations and Government Operations Chair Skoufis seeks to be re-elected to – I am forwarding it first by the below. The other three will follow, directly.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
www.judgewatch.org
914-421-1200

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

Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 2:36 PM

To: 'news@freemanonline.com' <news@freemanonline.com>; 'kcorrado@medianewsgroup.com' <kcorrado@medianewsgroup.com>; 'ifusfeld@21st-centurymedia.com' <ifusfeld@21st-centurymedia.com>; 'ilajara@21st-centurymedia.com' <ilajara@21st-centurymedia.com>; 'jschiffres@freemanonline.com' <jschiffres@freemanonline.com>; 'editor@tcnewspapers.com' <editor@tcnewspapers.com>; 'clinsky@tcnewspapers.com' <clinsky@tcnewspapers.com>; 'lwu@tcnewspapers.com' <lwu@tcnewspapers.com>; 'mreynolds@tcnewspapers.com' <mreynolds@tcnewspapers.com>; 'nita.van@juno.com' <nita.van@juno.com>; 'judi_kins@yahoo.com' <judi_kins@yahoo.com>; 'judyy@frontiernet.net' <judy@frontiernet.net>; 'dialead@msn.com'

<dialead@msn.com>; 'cgross1955@gmail.com' <cgross1955@gmail.com>; 'deaconpeter@att.net' <deaconpeter@att.net>; 'mveronesi@verizon.net' <mveronesi@verizon.net>; 'telltammy123@gmail.com' <telltammy123@gmail.com>; 'mrskendraelliot@gmail.com' <mrskendraelliot@gmail.com>
Cc: 'seward@nysenate.gov' <seward@nysenate.gov>; 'metzger@nysenate.gov' <metzger@nysenate.gov>; 'skoufis@nysenate.gov' <skoufis@nysenate.gov>; 'amedore@nysenate.gov' <amedore@nysenate.gov>; 'millerb@nyassembly.gov' <millerb@nyassembly.gov>; 'taguec@nyassembly.gov' <taguec@nyassembly.gov>; 'CahillK@nyassembly.gov' <CahillK@nyassembly.gov>; 'jacobsonj@nyassembly.gov' <jacobsonj@nyassembly.gov>; 'ucda@co.ulster.ny.us' <ucda@co.ulster.ny.us>

Subject: Ulster County Elections 2020 -- Informing Voters with EVIDENCE: public corruption/grand jury complaint vs Ulster County's 8 state legislators -- 6 running for re-election -- which Ulster County D.A. Clegg is "sitting on"

**TO: Daily Freeman
Times Hudson Valley Media (Times Community Newspapers)**

Ulster County's eight state legislators – six of whom are running for re-election – are the subjects of a **fully-documented** public corruption/grand jury complaint, filed with Ulster County District Attorney Clegg, who has been “sitting on” it. The complaint involves the “force of law” commission/committee scheme that gave all six of them pay raises – and a legislature not operating at a remotely constitutional level.

The June 19, 2020 complaint, by the Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA), is above-attached – and below are the e-mails transmitting it and the above-attached July 30, 2020 FOIL request to D.A. Clegg. CJA's substantiating evidentiary webpage for the complaint is here: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/searching-nys/2020-legislative/grand-juries.htm>.

As stated by the complaint, Ulster County voters are entitled to know that their state legislators cannot be re-elected because they must be indicted for larceny and other corruption on EVIDENCE so DISPOSITIVE as to assure convictions. So, too, retiring Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Seward and Senator Amedore, who will be pocketing *salary-based* pensions that are also larcenous.

To facilitate your inquiries of the complained-against state legislators and D.A. Clegg, I am cc'ing them on this e-mail. What, if anything, do they deny or dispute. Let them start where the complaint starts: my July 16, 2019 e-mail to Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Seward and the Legislature's 14 other stipend-receiving leaders requesting that they forward the e-mail to the 198 other state legislators, with its attached July 15, 2019 written NOTICE and substantiating analysis establishing that the December 10, 2018 Report of the Committee on Legislative and Executive Compensation – raising their legislative salaries from \$79,500 to \$110,000 – is “a fraud on the People of the State of New York – and a larceny of their tax dollars’, violating a succession of penal laws, and that their duty was to void it, to return the pay-raise monies they had already received, and to initiate criminal prosecutions of the Committee's four members and abetting attorneys.” The analysis is 46 pages, excluding exhibits. Will they furnish you with their findings of fact and conclusions of law? If not, I'm sure ordinary Ulster County citizens would be able to help you with what is obvious. Just accompany your story with links to the complaint and the evidentiary webpage so that they can see for themselves the open-and-shut, *prima facie* EVIDENCE that D.A. Clegg has been withholding from an Ulster County grand jury to maintain his own fraudulently-boosted D.A. salary, paid by Ulster County taxpayers.

I am available to answer your questions and assist you, to the max -- on a story not only upending Ulster County's state legislative races, but, additionally, ALL New York's other state legislative races and its 15 D.A. races – and **that's for starters**.

Thank you.

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

www.judgewatch.org

914-421-1200

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

Sent: Thursday, July 30, 2020 11:25 AM

To: 'ucda@co.ulster.ny.us' <ucda@co.ulster.ny.us>

Subject: Reasonable questions arising from your nonfeasance: June 19, 2020 public corruption complaint in support of grand jury inquiry, pursuant to Article I, §6 of the NYS Constitution, of Ulster County state legislators...

TO: Ulster County District Attorney Dave Clegg

I have received no acknowledgment or other response to my above-attached June 19, 2020 public corruption/grand jury complaint against Ulster County state legislators, which I sent you by the below e-mail, with a direct link to the substantiating evidentiary webpage: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/searching-nys/2020-legislative/grand-juries.htm>.

As the complaint presents evidence so *prima facie* and open-and-shut as to leave no doubt that a grand jury would speedily indict – and a trial jury speedily convict – the complained-against state legislators and their accomplices, your nonfeasance raises reasonable questions as to your performance with respect to *other* public corruption complaints filed by *other* members of the public. To help answer these questions, I have today filed a FOIL/information request with your FOIL/records access officer, Assistant District Attorney Joan Lamb – to which you are cc'd. It is attached.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director

Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

www.judgewatch.org

914-421-1200

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

Sent: Friday, June 19, 2020 10:33 AM

To: 'ucda@co.ulster.ny.us' <ucda@co.ulster.ny.us>

Subject: CORRUPTION COMPLAINT in support of grand jury inquiry, pursuant to Article I, §6 of the NYS Constitution, of Ulster County state legislators for "wilful misconduct in office", including larceny & fraud...

TO: Ulster County District Attorney Dave Clegg

Attached is my above-entitled corruption/grand jury complaint of today's date addressed to you – with a separate scanned signature page. The link for CJA's "Grand Juries" webpage for the complaint, hyperlinking, linking, and posting all referred-to evidence, is here: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/searching-nys/2020-legislative/grand-juries.htm>.

Should you require an original signed complaint, please notify me – and I will send it, immediately.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director

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