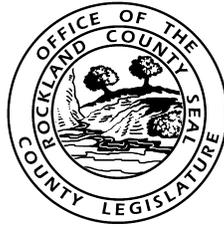


Press



Release

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For Immediate Release

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New City, NY (Nov. 18, 2016)

STATEMENT BY LEGISLATURE CHAIRMAN ALDEN H. WOLFE

Ed Day and others have repeatedly accused County Legislators of trying to protect "certain constituents" from an investigation by voting against Dr. Penny Jennings' confirmation as Rockland County Human Rights Commissioner. This outrageous accusation is the latest in a series of fictitious stories marketed by Ed Day to advance his political agenda of delegitimizing the Legislature and exploiting divisions in our community.

Legislators first found out about the investigation in the newspaper, days AFTER voting against Dr. Jennings' appointment. Legislators were completely unaware of any issue brewing within the CDBG program. As of right now, we STILL haven't been given any information by Ed Day or his administration other than a one-line response that HUD is conducting an investigation. All we know is what we read in the press. He didn't even send us a copy of his press release.

This investigation could not have possibly affected our decision, which for me was largely driven by Dr. Jennings' unwillingness to participate in the legislative process. Our attempts to gain additional information about this issue have led us to believe that Dr. Jennings DID NOT herself initiate an investigation. It appears that the administration may have been aware of an issue within the program months ago - prior to Dr. Jennings' appointment as Acting Commissioner - and declined to pursue it.

It's important to know that Legislators would never attempt to interfere with an investigation into alleged wrongdoing. We completely support our District Attorney, HUD and any law enforcement agency's efforts to protect our taxpayers, wherever the investigation may lead.

The Rockland County Legislature works carefully to protect and respect the legislative process. We make decisions as a body of representatives and we don't take lightly our responsibility to make choices that are in the best interests of ALL of our constituents. Ed Day refuses to acknowledge that there are two co-equal branches of government in Rockland. It's time to stop treating Rockland County like a dictatorship.

If this was REALLY about hiring the best person for the job, and Ed Day was REALLY interested in working with us to secure Dr. Penny Jennings' confirmation, then he would have done what most reasonable people would have done - reached out, had a conversation and tried to find common ground. Instead, he did what he typically does when he doesn't get his way - attack, blame, deflect, and most pathetically, invent his own reality. These tactics are great if you're looking to divide, build hate and destroy relationships. These are not the tactics of a leader.

I invite Ed Day to reconsider his strategy. Let's start working together to ensure we handle our county's issues in a civil, respectful and responsible way.

In the interim, I firmly stand behind the Legislature's decision. We look forward to a full briefing about the HUD investigation of the CDBG program at our November 29th committee meetings

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