

ONONDAGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE

2011 TENTATIVE ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

PUBLIC HEARING in the above conducted at the Onondaga County OnCenter, South State Street, Syracuse, New York, on October 7, 2010, 7:00 pm to 10:35 pm.

LEGISLATIVE APPEARANCES:

JAMES M. RHINEHART, Chairman of Legislature

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE:

- CASEY E. JORDAN, Chairman
JAMES A. CORBETT, Vice Chairman
RICHARD M LESNIAK, Republican Floor Leader
ROBERT D. WARNER, 13th District
PATRICK KILMARTIN, 11th District
KEVIN A HOLMQUIST, 10th District
THOMAS BUCKEL, JR., 7th District
WILLIAM T. KINNE, 15th District
MARK A. STANCZYK, Democratic Floor Leader

Reported By: John F. Drury, CSR, RPR Court Reporter 471-7397

INDEX TO SPEAKERS

Table with columns: SPEAKER, PAGE. Lists names and their corresponding page numbers, such as ROBERT DOUCETTE Arts 9, CHARLOTTE HOLSTEIN FOCUS 14, etc.

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

- LINDA R. ERVIN 19th District
MONICA WILLIAMS 18th District
MARTIN MASTERPOLE 11th District
SAM LAGUZZA 16th District
ROBERT DeMORE 12th District
KATHLEEN A. RAPP 5th District
JUDITH A. TASSONE 7th District
WILLIAM MEYER, JR. 3rd District
JOHN DOUGHERTY, 2nd District
DEBORAH L. MATURO, Clerk

Chairman Jordan

CHAIRMAN JORDAN: Welcome to the public meeting regarding the 2011 Proposed Onondaga County budget. I want to open with a brief statement and then we'll get right to business. In the early spring of this year the County Executive advised this Legislature of Onondaga County's forecast of budget deficit for 2011 of more than \$50 million.

At that time the County Executive expressed her belief that it was imperative that the county retain more sales tax revenues in order to offset that projected deficit. After extensive deliberation and debate this Legislature subsequently voted to have Onondaga County retain more of the sales tax revenues and to share less.

At the time of the sales tax vote there was much concern over how the additional sales tax revenue that the county would retain would be used, and most if not all of the members of the

1 Chairman Jordan
 2 Legislature expressed their view that
 3 those revenues must be applied to
 4 reduction of the real property tax level.
 5 This has been the tone the Legislature
 6 has taken since their vote on the use of
 7 sales tax revenues and during this
 8 year's budget and due process.

9 In the spring of this year Chairman
 10 Rhinehart and I therefore met with all
 11 the county department heads to openly
 12 discuss our budgetary challenges for
 13 2011 and to reiterate the intention of
 14 this Legislature. At the time we also
 15 emphasized the pressure that the
 16 Legislature was under to reduce
 17 spending, restrict hiring, and to follow
 18 the County Executive's directive to do
 19 less with less. And to reinforce the
 20 necessity to find ways to reduce costs
 21 and to increase efficiency.

22 Several weeks ago Chairman Rhinehart,
 23 the Joint Leader Lesniak and I met with
 24 Deputy County Executive Bill Fisher and
 25 Chief Fiscal Officer Jim Rowley to

1 Chairman Jordan
 2 reinforce the Legislature's commitment
 3 to avoid an increase in real property
 4 taxes. On September 15th the County
 5 Executive presented her proposed budget,
 6 which decreased the county tax levy by
 7 approximately \$3 million but did not
 8 avoid a substantial increase in taxes in
 9 most of the towns in the county.

10 Our goal during the budget process
 11 has therefore been to do all we could to
 12 ensure that the 2011 budget ultimately
 13 passed by this Legislature meets the
 14 objective expressed throughout this
 15 process, avoidance of increase of real
 16 property taxes.

17 On September 30th the Ways and Means
 18 Committee voted on the proposed budget
 19 which reduced spending by an additional
 20 \$45.5 million. Although looking at a
 21 substantial reduction in spending that
 22 budget should not be viewed in any way
 23 as a commentary on the good and valuable
 24 work being performed by the employees of
 25 Onondaga County or the quality of those

1 Jordan/Buckel
 2 employees. It's never easy to reduce
 3 spending, and please know that the
 4 proposed spending reductions were not
 5 entered into haste or without
 6 consideration -- I'm sorry, considerable
 7 thought and reflection. It is our firm
 8 belief however, that the proposed
 9 reductions are absolutely necessary and
 10 essential for the well-being of our
 11 citizenry and the future prosperity of
 12 Onondaga County.

13 Nevertheless, we're all
 14 representatives of the people that we
 15 serve, and as such we welcome the
 16 thoughts and input of our constituency.

17 **LEGISLATOR BUCKEL:** Mr. Chairman,
 18 point of order. In your remarks you
 19 mentioned the will of the Legislature.
 20 There has never been a vote that said
 21 that the Legislature does what you said
 22 it will do. We have not had a vote on
 23 that yet. And we are here to deliberate
 24 and hear people so that we can make an
 25 informed decision. What you just heard

1 Jordan/Corbett
 2 is not the will of the Legislature but
 3 rather a small group. May we proceed?

4 **CHAIRMAN JORDAN:** Okay, before we
 5 proceed I need to do a little house-
 6 keeping item. There are emergency exits
 7 all along the left hand side or right
 8 hand side of the room as well as in both
 9 the backs and along both sides of this
 10 room. So if there is an emergency
 11 hopefully all are aware of the closest
 12 emergency exit. Are there any speakers
 13 signed up?

14 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Yes. It's on
 15 the script. So what we're going to do
 16 is there are a lot of speakers, and to
 17 make sure everyone is heard, as you know
 18 last year it went to 2 o'clock in the
 19 morning. We're going to be calling them
 20 out two and two. So we'll do this four
 21 at a time and it's orderly. There are
 22 mikes set up on these two aisles here.
 23 And we're going to be taking them as
 24 they were signed in.

25 So first is Robert Doucette with the

Doucette

1
2 Armory Development and Management for
3 the arts. And then Chuckie Holstein,
4 and then David Panasci, Syracuse Opera.
5 Panasci, I might as well apologize right
6 now some of these names. And Steven
7 Kern with the Everson. Thank you.

8 **CHAIRMAN JORDAN:** Before we get
9 started I want to apologize, I'm just
10 getting over bronchitis, so if I cough
11 during the presentation please don't be
12 offended.

13 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** One of the
14 disclaimers on there in an effort to
15 make sure everyone is heard please try
16 to keep your remarks to around 3
17 minutes. If you have something written,
18 that you want to give the clerk if you
19 haven't done yet then when you're done
20 give it to the clerk, thank you. And
21 state your name, please.

22 **ROBERT DOUCETTE:** My name is Robert
23 Doucette, I live in the city of Syracuse
24 at 102 Berkley Drive, and my profession
25 is I'm a real estate developer. I'm

Doucette

1
2 here tonight to ask the Legislators to
3 restore all of the monies to the funding
4 of the arts that was originally put in
5 the County Executive's budget. The
6 reasons that I'm about to give, and I
7 have to tell you I feel very
8 passionately about this issue and about
9 the arts. And I know my feelings are
10 shared by many of you.

11 But I want to tell you that first of
12 all, when I read in the paper today the
13 amount of money that we're talking
14 about, I was quite astounded to be
15 honest with you. That the entire arts
16 budget is 1/10th of one percent. That
17 to me is an incredibly small amount of
18 money for the amount of return that you
19 get for the money. I know that there is
20 some kind of talk about that if we need
21 there is a different pot of money to get
22 this from and this is what's going back
23 and forth. But the arts organizations
24 that are sitting here and many of their
25 balance sheets now from the towns read

Doucette

1
2 zero. It's cold comfort to them to hear
3 that kind of argument.

4 So you know, for me it's kind of a
5 simple, it's a simple proposition, one
6 that I make every day in my business.
7 You know, how do I get the best return
8 on my dollar? That's one of the things
9 that is so interesting about the arts.
10 You know we spent \$1.28 million in
11 Onondaga County and we create \$62
12 million worth of economic activity. I
13 wish to God I could produce that kind of
14 a return in my real estate business, I
15 really do.

16 You know, we employ 1,150 people in
17 the arts organizations. But you know,
18 my remarks are brief because they have
19 to be brief, here's my last point and
20 it's less obvious because it's not
21 quantifiable. I don't think there is a
22 person on this Legislature, I bet there
23 is not a person in this room that
24 doesn't recognize the fact that we need
25 more jobs in this county, that we need

Doucette

1
2 greater economic activity in this
3 county. I think that for the lawyers in
4 the room we can all stipulate to that.

5 If an employer is coming to this
6 city or even someone, some of the
7 employers in the city deciding to stay
8 in the city, one of the issues, one of
9 the first issues they talk about is,
10 what's it like to live there? What's it
11 like to be in Central New York? What
12 kind of life does my family get to live
13 or my employees get to live? The
14 quality of life is a very very important
15 factor in this world today because we
16 are all so mobile. You know,
17 corporations can locate anywheres.

18 So this is an incredibly important
19 economic development issue. And that's
20 my last point to you, is that we cannot
21 be seen as an area, a region, a city
22 that says we don't care about the arts.
23 And why do I say that? Even though you
24 know I know many of you say well of
25 course we care about the arts. But you

Doucette

1
 2 know that when you look in the papers
 3 and you see the amount we spend and the
 4 amount you're willing to cut it says
 5 something, kind of loud and clear, that
 6 we don't care about the arts. And I
 7 don't believe, could be wrong, but I
 8 don't believe that the constituents
 9 throughout this county, I don't care if
 10 you're in a small town or in one of the
 11 larger towns or in the city of Syracuse,
 12 it's the constituents of this area, your
 13 constituents want to be known as an area
 14 just doesn't care about culture, doesn't
 15 care about the arts, I don't believe
 16 that. And ultimately I do not believe
 17 that upon reflection you are going to be
 18 the kind of Legislators that is going to
 19 say that about our county.

20 So I just want to again state my
 21 purpose very clear, I think all of the
 22 money should be refunded, put back into
 23 the budget for the arts that were
 24 originally put in there by the executive
 25 budget. And I thank you for your

Holstein

1
 2 attention.
 3 **CHARLOTTE (CHUCKIE) HOLSTEIN:** I'm
 4 Chuckie Holstein, I'm a proud resident
 5 of Onondaga County. I'm the director of
 6 FOCUS Greater Syracuse, and to remind
 7 some of you it's so nice to see so many
 8 of you who participated in FOCUS over
 9 the years. That FOCUS stands for
 10 Forging Our Community's United Strength.
 11 And united we are strong. And I think
 12 just the mere fact that so many citizens
 13 are here tonight represent I believe
 14 something that FOCUS has helped to
 15 foster in our community.
 16 Thank you for allowing me this time.
 17 And I want to tell you why you should
 18 feel proud and I feel proud, my board
 19 feels proud and the citizens feel proud
 20 that we have a citizen engagement
 21 organization in our community. I'm not
 22 speaking now as the executive director
 23 or for the board but I'm really speaking
 24 for the thousands of citizens who have
 25 had access to FOCUS. FOCUS builds

Holstein

1
 2 capacity, we build intellectual capital
 3 and we do that by offering opportunity
 4 for individuals and institutions and
 5 community organizations to collaborate
 6 and cooperate. And I know in the 12
 7 years FOCUS has been in existence we've
 8 seen a lot more partnerships,
 9 collaborations and cooperation. We do
 10 it ourselves. And I just have a few
 11 examples to tell you about. But I also
 12 have some interesting quotes that have
 13 come really only in the past couple
 14 weeks.
 15 We had an Asian high school, Asian
 16 immigrant high school student interning
 17 for us one summer, she's now at Syracuse
 18 University. Just the other day she said
 19 to me in an e-mail, she said I want to
 20 thank you for what you and all of FOCUS
 21 do. I'm currently taking a political
 22 science class and I always think of
 23 FOCUS and how FOCUS applied what we
 24 learn in class and real life experiences.
 25 And I think she said it all. I'm very

Holstein

1
 2 proud of the fact that this young high
 3 school girl could put it in such
 4 distinct language.
 5 We involve citizens in research,
 6 public policy planning, advocacy, public
 7 education and public outreach. We do
 8 that in a variety of ways. We've done
 9 citizens actions strategic plans, we
 10 have done four of them so far. One on
 11 the arts and culture and my heart bleeds
 12 if the arts and culture gets so cut that
 13 we don't have a quality of life in this
 14 community we all are seeking.
 15 One of the efforts of the arts and
 16 cultures was that there was a city
 17 ordinance tax. The ordinance is Number
 18 453 and designated downtown as the
 19 cultural district. We ought to do more
 20 with that. We could do a lot more with
 21 that if we just would advertise it. We
 22 did one on water and waterways. We take
 23 all our of our citizens to the classes
 24 to see the county wastewater treatment
 25 plant. And if you haven't been there

Holstein

1
 2 you really must go to see how the water,
 3 the county should be applauded for
 4 having built that state-of-the-art
 5 facility. We've done it on building
 6 sustainable community and strategic
 7 planning, and right now we're just
 8 finishing one, we're calling it Central
 9 New York Pathways, but actually it's
 10 walking, hiking, biking. And people who
 11 use wheelchairs came to us and said
 12 don't leave us out. So we're not. And
 13 we'll have trails and urban walking
 14 trails and hikes ready for us to talk
 15 about at the end of the year.

16 In the year 2000 FOCUS decided to do
 17 an indicators report. I call it a
 18 report card on the community. We've
 19 done it again in the year 2005 and this
 20 year 2010, a whole class at Maxwell
 21 school. The community benchmark of
 22 about 25 students actually collected the
 23 data. A real gift to our community by
 24 the way. And FOCUS has been the
 25 publisher and the distributor of the

Holstein

1 indicators report.
 2
 3 One foundation also recently said to
 4 me that the FOCUS indicators gives us an
 5 insight to know the community's assets,
 6 and challenges and that help foundations
 7 with their funding. So we're going to
 8 continue to do that and we're going to
 9 partner with the Central New York
 10 community foundation on our indicators.

11 We're working on civility in public
 12 discourse. We know the bad behavior in
 13 some meetings, I'm sure not at this one.
 14 But we know that we want to help people
 15 who plan public meetings so that the
 16 behavior is acceptable behavior and
 17 everybody gets heard, because it is
 18 democracy, everybody needs to be heard.
 19 We're working with the Parks program,
 20 the Syracuse University, the program for
 21 advancement of research in conflicts and
 22 collaboration. So we're very excited
 23 about that, we hope to have a tool kit
 24 before the end of the year for that
 25 program.

Holstein

1
 2 I don't know if you're aware of the
 3 fact that the CDC, center for Disease
 4 Control and Prevention in Washington and
 5 Atlanta, I think they're in Atlanta, has
 6 come through FOCUS to our area twice to
 7 bring together citizens in a citizens
 8 forum. And the first one was on
 9 pandemic flu. We got a hundred people
 10 for them. The second one was on the
 11 national vaccine plan. They keep coming
 12 back through FOCUS to see us.

13 And I'd like to talk about our
 14 sterling program that so many of you
 15 have participated in, our Citizens
 16 Academy. We partner with University
 17 College and Syracuse University.
 18 Citizens have been just great and I have
 19 so many quotes from people who have gone
 20 through Citizens Academy I had to pick
 21 one. And I picked one that I think
 22 would touch your heart as it touched
 23 mine. This woman said, to be honest I
 24 have never even voted, and I'm 49 years
 25 old. I always felt I didn't have enough

Holstein

1 knowledge or understanding of the issues
 2 to make an informed decision. The class
 3 opened my eyes and provided avenues to
 4 get information and people to contact.
 5
 6 I now vote.

7 Last but not least let me just to
 8 tell you a couple things that happened
 9 just last week. FOCUS partnered with
 10 the Tech Garden, and the SBA and the
 11 SBDC. These are not necessarily citizen
 12 engagement organizations but they are
 13 business organizations. We held an
 14 election for green entrepreneurs. So
 15 many came and we ran out of paper plates
 16 and forks and so on. But that's not my
 17 story. My story is that on the way out
 18 two different groups of people stopped
 19 by to say, I made a connection and I
 20 think I'm going to do business with this
 21 person beside me. That's growth of our
 22 economy and our community, that's
 23 exciting.

24 The other thing that happened we had
 25 a Ph.D. candidate from University of

Holstein

1
2 Wisconsin who found us online. She said
3 that we were probably the strongest
4 citizens engagement organization she
5 could find in the country. She came to
6 a session and here's what she said when
7 she left. She said, I'm blown away with
8 what folks accomplish. After I sift all
9 the information gathered in Syracuse I
10 need to extend my research to incorporate
11 all that I experienced with FOCUS.

12 And the same day, just the other day
13 we had two visitors from Ottawa, Canada
14 who want to start a Citizens Academy,
15 and they too said they were blown away.
16 That was the new word for enthusiastic
17 about. They said they were blown away
18 with the intensity of the class
19 participation and the richness provided
20 by the expert presenter. And many of
21 you have been our expert presenters.

22 So having said all that and I've let
23 you know what we do and how we do it, we
24 really want to recommend very strongly
25 that we stay within your budget and

Panasci

1 maintain present levels, thank you.

2 **DAVID PANASCI:** Good evening, I'm
3 David Panasci, I live in the Town of
4 Pompey, I have a management consulting
5 practice in Camillus. Tonight I'm here
6 as in my role of the Chairman of the
7 Board of Syracuse Opera Company. But
8 I'm also speaking on behalf of all the
9 arts and cultural organizations that
10 have been eliminated or cut in the
11 county budget.

12 My purpose is to urge the members of
13 the Legislature to restore this funding.
14 While like most people I understand the
15 financial pressures the county is
16 feeling, these proposed cuts would have
17 a significant potential, potentially
18 permanent impact on our community. The
19 Syracuse Opera like many of these other
20 cultural institutions enhances the
21 quality of life here in Central New
22 York. It should be noted not only that
23 they enhance the quality of life, but as
24 mentioned earlier, they have an impact

Panasci

1
2 on our economy, through generating sales
3 tax, through paying their employees and
4 also generating payrolls for workers at
5 restaurants and other local businesses.

6 In recent years a lot of these
7 organizations have worked diligently
8 collaborating behind the scenes to
9 reduce costs and still maintaining the
10 high quality of cultural offerings for
11 our community. To Mr. Doucette's point
12 we really get a big bang for our buck.
13 I'll give you an example. The Syracuse
14 Opera Company has a long-standing
15 partnership with the Syracuse Symphony.
16 In any given year the Opera Company
17 hires the Symphony to the tune of about
18 a hundred thousand dollars. In essence
19 the Opera Company is one of the biggest
20 supporters of the Syracuse Symphony. A
21 lot of our cultural organizations are
22 intertwined this way. If the proposed
23 budget cuts went through this would not
24 only put the Opera Company at risk but
25 it would also have a serious financial

Panasci

1 impact on the Symphony as well.

2 Let me talk a little bit more about
3 the local economy. I want you to
4 consider the long term consequences of
5 placing these cultural groups in a
6 vulnerable position. In recent years
7 the largest and fastest growing segment
8 of our economy have been imagine that,
9 hospitals and the universities. The
10 continued growth and success of these
11 institutions is the reliance upon their
12 ability to attract and retain high
13 quality professionals. A vibrant arts
14 community gives these institutions a
15 competitive edge for recruiting and for
16 retaining quality people. A weakened
17 arts community sends these professionals
18 elsewhere.

19 And I know that there is some people
20 that believe that some of these cultural
21 organizations could deal with less
22 funding. That is not the case. The
23 depth of some of these cuts could put
24 many of these organizations in jeopardy.

Panasci/Kern

1
2 Losing a single component of our arts
3 community would diminish our entire
4 cultural offering, consequently devalue
5 our community as a whole. We can't
6 afford to do that. I'm asking each of
7 you to think about the long term effect
8 of funding for arts and culture. These
9 are among the most prized assets we have
10 in Central New York and they're a
11 primary reason why many of us choose to
12 live and work here. Thank you for your
13 time.

14 **STEVEN KERN:** My name is Steven Kern,
15 I'm Executive Director of the Everson
16 Museum, I'm a resident of Syracuse. And
17 thank you very much for allowing me to
18 speak this evening on behalf not just of
19 the Everson but also of all of the arts;
20 the reason that I moved here two years
21 ago.

22 I'd like to just start with a brief
23 history lesson. Syracuse Museum of Fine
24 Arts, to become the Everson Museum when
they merged in 1949 and in our present

Kern

1
2 location since 1968, founded as a public
3 private partnership in a visionary and
4 innovative approach to museums and
5 communities recognizing the power to
6 build community using arts and culture.
7 This goes backs to 1895. In New York
8 State only one other organization was
9 founded on the same model of private and
10 public partnership, and that was the
11 Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York
12 City. So visionary innovations were
13 what led us in our first days as an arts
14 community, visual arts community here in
15 Central New York. I don't want to lose
16 that innovative power and the power of
17 vision, because it's as apt and
18 important to us today as it was more
19 than a 115 years ago.

20 I don't want to talk about whether
21 or not people should like art because
22 that's up to the individual. But I will
23 say as I've said before that each and
24 every one of us is hard wired to like
25 art, all of the arts. Music, performance,

Kern

1
2 the visual arts. Because color and
3 sound and rhythm are a part of our life
4 blood, it's where we come from as human
5 beings.

6 I don't want to talk about whether
7 or not we are valuable in this community
8 because we have proved that. And most
9 recently last year in the coming
10 together of music, performance, visual
11 arts this community saw results that
12 have not been seen in generations and
13 served as a model not just here in
14 Syracuse but across the country. As
15 everything from Canada's news to ABC,
16 from coast to coast, Vancouver to New
17 Brunswick, from Los Angeles to New York
18 City lauded what was happening in
19 Syracuse.

20 It's not just achievement that we
21 brought 60,000 people to the Everson
22 alone, let alone what was happening at
23 Stage, at Symphony, at Opera, for
24 example. But this has brought positive
25 attention to the entire community. Not

Kern

1
2 just arts and culture but the entire
3 community in the most positive possible
4 way. And all of this took place in the
5 most challenging, difficult economic
6 times we've ever seen. Arts and culture
7 rallied and now should not be turned
8 away but rather embraced as something
9 that brought millions of dollars into
10 this community in the end of 2009
11 beginning of 2010. And also because
12 it's not just an arts product, it
13 enriched the lives of everybody here in
14 this community who chose to participate,
15 and those numbers were huge.

16 Everson's funding with the county is
17 intact. We're one of the institutions
18 that made it through the cuts this year
19 and I'm delighted about that. But just
20 as an incoming tide lifts all boats, a
21 falling tide gets us all stuck in the
22 mud. And I think that that's a lesson
23 that we have to remember as we make all
24 of our financial decisions coming up.
25 You make the decision about funding and

Kern

1
2 we as to how we're going to work with
3 that.

4 You already heard from Mr. Doucette
5 and Mr. Panasci about the amount of
6 money we're talking about, and it seems
7 trivial. To me it's a lot of money. To
8 all of us individually it's a lot of
9 money, and it's important in the budget
10 too, if there is no money to support it
11 one dollar is too much. But it's
12 one-tenth of one percent of the county
13 budget for the whole arts and culture
14 budget line of support. And the amount
15 that's being contested is 3/100ths of a
16 percent of the budget. And I think that
17 this is something that has to be kept in
18 mind for future discussion about what
19 we're funding truly should be.

20 We in arts and culture need a
21 reliable sustainable funding stream. We
22 hear about the CRT, we know awards have
23 been made but we're still waiting for
24 guidelines and procedures. We hear
25 about RDC and we're looking forward to

Kern

1 hearing more.

2 I would like to end with another
3 observation that I heard a lot about.
4 In fact one of the things explained to
5 me whether or not I would move to
6 Syracuse. This is a place where small
7 business is thriving, and in fact it's
8 not big business, we've seen what's
9 happened there, small business is what's
10 driving this economy. The arts are also
11 small business, 1,200 employees all
12 together but most of us have fewer than
13 25 employees. If we're talking about
14 support for small business don't forget
15 about the arts in that.

16 All of that said I urge you to
17 return the eliminated organizations to
18 the county budget and I look forward to
19 further discussion about these reliable
20 and sustaining funding sources that are
21 so important to survival and survival
22 for all of us. Thank you.

23 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Next we have
24 Bill Graham, CSEA, Dave Steinberg
25

Graham

1
2 Onondaga County Fire Chiefs, Dave
3 Osborne, Concerned Citizens, and the
4 next is can't make out the first name,
5 Fritz with the EOC/EM 302. So those
6 names I called up, if you would come up
7 and take your spots. First up Mr. Graham.

8 **PHIL GRAHAM:** Greetings Mr. Chairman
9 and members of the Legislature. I come
10 before you tonight to ask you to use
11 common sense with looking at the budget
12 cuts. We must do what is best for the
13 citizens of Onondaga County. Knee jerk
14 reactions to budget problems will not
15 move this county into a more secure
16 future.

17 Let me talk about some of the more
18 selfless employees of Onondaga County:
19 Our snow plowers, we have some of the
20 safest roads in Central New York because
21 of these men and women. To talk about
22 moving our snow plowing from the county
23 to the towns makes no sense. We have
24 the personnel, equipment and facilities
25 to do the job correctly and safely.

Graham

1
2 Many of the towns have no desire to take
3 over the plowing.

4 We must keep the tow truck that is
5 being eliminated, which the driver says
6 is structurally sound and does over 80
7 tows per year of county and town
8 vehicles. At 800 to 1,500 per tow it
9 makes no sense in the contract to sell
10 the truck and lay off the operator who
11 is also a mechanic. Use common sense,
12 the math doesn't add up. The highway
13 department is down so many drivers
14 because of early retirement. They can't
15 afford more layoffs. The department has
16 sent out a memo asking for people to
17 sign up for wing persons this coming
18 winter. The department can run with
19 equipment we currently have. Cut
20 equipment purchases, not positions.

21 Let's talk about correctional
22 health. The union is of the opinion
23 that we can give correctional health and
24 food services better than contracted
25 vendors located outside of Onondaga

Graham

1
 2 County. The county has said that it is
 3 willing to contract out the health
 4 services even if it costs more than the
 5 current costs. Let's use common sense.
 6 The county has done little to nothing to
 7 hire a new doctor to oversee health
 8 services. Rather ran away from the
 9 issue and tried to contract it out.
 10 Contracting out is not the solution to
 11 tough problems. Let me ask you how
 12 contracting out has worked out in the
 13 OnCenter. Mismanagement of money has
 14 left more oversight by the county and
 15 taking over the cleaning and maintenance
 16 of the buildings by Facilities.

17 The correctional food services has
 18 proposed cuts to the current cost of
 19 services to save the bottom line.
 20 Bringing in a contractor from outside
 21 the county will hurt local food vendors
 22 as well as the service as a whole. We
 23 contracted out the service years ago,
 24 and it was brought back, they have
 county workers do it. The union will

Graham

1
 2 not sit back and allow the county to
 3 contract out our jobs. We have an
 4 exclusive right to this work and will
 5 legally challenge any movement to
 6 contract out for this work.

7 We ask the Legislators to look at
 8 the upgrades proposal to management at
 9 parks, yet closed down Pratt's Falls and
 10 lay off more hard working employees.

11 The union has already been hurt by
 12 last year's layoff and early retirement.
 13 We can't afford to give up more jobs,
 14 cutting jobs of lower paid positions at
 15 Van Duyn and the Library doesn't add up
 16 to much.

17 Let's look at the real problem,
 18 Onondaga County and across New York
 19 State, the cost of Medicaid. 53 percent
 20 of the county taxes are for mandated
 21 Medicaid services. We have to decide
 22 whether to keep open parks or support
 23 the arts, yet we have no say on these
 24 mandates. It's time for taxpayers in
 25 New York State to rise up together and

Graham

1
 2 say enough is enough. We've all heard
 3 the numbers. We spend more money in New
 4 York State for Medicaid than the two
 5 largest -- the two next largest spending
 6 Medicaid states: California and Texas
 7 combined. We can no longer afford this
 8 kind of spending. A 3 percent cap on
 9 spending is hardly slowing down the run-
 10 away train. We must reach out to our
 11 state representatives and say enough
 12 already. Medicaid cutbacks are needed.

13 I ask the Legislature to use common
 14 sense. The towns and villages have been
 15 shielded by severe cuts that the county
 16 has absorbed the past few years. It's
 17 time for them to feel the pinch. They
 18 must also look at consolidation and cut-
 19 back of services. The County Executive
 20 talked on the radio today about working
 21 with anyone that will further Onondaga
 22 County. How about working with the
 23 unions and the Legislature? We can get
 24 much more done by working together than
 25 by ourselves.

Graham

1
 2 CSEA lobbied hard to make sure that
 3 the federal government provided our
 4 counties with federal FMAP money.
 5 Onondaga County is supposed to receive
 6 about \$7 million of that money, which is
 7 supposed to be specifically used to
 8 avoid layoffs of public workers. We
 9 would like to know if that money has
 10 been used for that purpose, and if so
 11 why we talked about increasing the
 12 amount of layoffs in the budget?

13 I don't know about the back room
 14 agreements that were made for the use of
 15 the sales tax money by the County
 16 Executive and the Legislature, but let's
 17 all take a deep breath and use a clear
 18 mind to make decisions. The cuts to
 19 jobs and services should be fair and
 20 equitable among everyone that is
 21 affected by this budget. We believe
 22 that we need a new spirit of labor-
 23 management cooperation in Onondaga
 24 County, where we can work together,
 25 solve our budget issues and come up with

Graham/Steinberg

1 positive solutions that will move our
2 county forward and not negatively impact
3 the quality of life services that CSEA
4 members provide. Some people may say
5 that words common sense and politicians
6 do not belong in the same sentence, but
7 I trust that you can and will do the
8 right thing. Thank you for your time.

9 **DAVID STEINBERG:** Thank you, I will
10 keep this brief. We've all seen, read
11 and heard the numerous benefits of full
12 staffing of the Onondaga County
13 Sheriff's office and Air 1. I'm David
14 Steinberg. The full staff of the
15 Onondaga County Sheriff's office and Air
16 1, that there is really no need to
17 repeat them all.

18 I'm here tonight as president of the
19 Onondaga County Fire Association. I was
20 born and raised in Onondaga County. I'm
21 here also tonight with almost 35 years
22 in fire and emergency medical services
23 in Onondaga County. Additionally, I'm
24 president of a family business on Burnet

Steinberg/Fritz

1 Avenue, and I'm a taxpayer.
2 The reason for me to be here tonight
3 is to offer my support and request your
4 support for Air 1 and the Onondaga
5 County Sheriff's office. I firmly
6 believe that any cuts or reduction in
7 service will have tragic results. The
8 life it costs could be mine. Thank you
9 for your time and please drive home
10 carefully.

11 **CHET FRITZ:** Members of the County
12 Legislature, my name is Chet Fritz, I'm
13 a past chief of Moyers Corners fire
14 department. I'm currently a deputy fire
15 coordinator for with Onondaga County. I
16 read with interest the Post Standard
17 article in today's paper where the
18 headline stated "For one million just 7
19 medical flights in Onondaga County."
20 That represents four percent of what Air
21 1 does. I'm here to speak about the
22 other 96 percent. Firefighters safety
23 and firefighter operations, police
24 safety and police work. A far greater

Fritz

1 number than 7 medical flights in
2 Onondaga County.
3 Additionally, it's my understanding
4 that the state police helicopter, 1816
5 covers 20 counties from Syracuse. So we
6 may not be talking duplication of
7 services. Remember the Bucky Phillips
8 manhunt in Erie County several years
9 back. The state police helicopter
10 assigned here was unavailable to our
11 residents. It was on that case for a
12 protracted period of time.

13 I spoke to you before, spoke to the
14 Legislature last year about saving Air
15 1, as I was the fire chief in the bird
16 at the Syroco fire. As you remember at
17 that fire we ordered firefighters from
18 the roof just before it collapsed.
19 Clearly the FLIR camera and being over
20 the fire with Air 1 made it possible to
21 get the firefighters down before the
22 roof collapsed, thus preventing two
23 deaths.

24 I understand the fiscal crisis that

Fritz

1 confronts Onondaga County. But don't
2 understand that when we have a life
3 saving tool such as Air 1, which is
4 wanted by city fire, city police, county
5 fire, EMS agencies as well as law
6 enforcement agencies, why it must be
7 sold. No matter how you decide it this
8 ship is not fiscal in nature but rather
9 has a very real human element. It saves
10 lives of firefighters, civilians and
11 helps catch bad guys. If it is sold,
12 and in the future emergency response
13 people perish because it is unavailable
14 we will attend the funerals and the
15 wakes.

16 The emergency responders will know
17 that these victims, our first response
18 families, and that would include fire,
19 police, EMS, our first response families
20 would have had a better chance of
21 survival had Air 1 been available.
22 Would you all want less for your
23 families, especially if they go in harms
24 way? I implore you, please don't take

1 Beach

2 this life saving tool from us, the
3 firefighters, police agencies and EMS
4 providers of Onondaga County. Thank you
5 for your time.

6 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** David?

7 **DAVID APPLETON:** I'm afraid I don't
8 know enough about the --

9 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** I'm looking for
10 David, looks like O-S-B-O -- Osborne,
11 Concerned Citizen.

12 **DAVID APPLETON:** I can't hear you.

13 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Is this you?

14 **DAVID APPLETON:** No.

15 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** All right,
16 David you'll have to wait then. I don't
17 have him on this list. Looks like Dick
18 Beach, Ruth Beltran, Sheriff Kevin Walsh
19 and Mel Simmons.

20 **DICK BEACH:** My name is Dick Richard
21 Beach. I've been a volunteer firefighter
22 for over 60 years. I joined the North
23 Syracuse volunteer fire department in
24 1948, I was elected fire chief in '58
25 and '59. I was the first director of

1 Beach

2 operations in NAVAC, was on their first
3 call 40 years ago. I was employed as a
4 fire dispatcher for Onondaga County in
5 1970; Fire Control was then in the
6 Mattydale fire station. In 1971 I was
7 employed as the Onondaga County
8 Assistant Fire Coordinator. I retired
9 in 1990 from Onondaga County with twenty
10 years service.

11 I'd like to speak to you about Air
12 1. This machine is like no other in the
13 Central New York area. Air 1 is a vital
14 tool of every public safety agency in
15 this county. Yes, every fire
16 department, both paid and volunteer,
17 police agencies and emergency medical
18 providers depend on this unit's ability
19 to resolve their problems quickly and
20 effectively. Nothing else is available
21 to our public safety units that can
22 replace Air 1.

23 I honestly believe if Air 1 is taken
24 away we will never be able to replace
25 it, it will be gone forever. We need

1 Beltran

2 your help now to assure that this life
3 saving tool will continue to be
4 available to allow the public safety
5 agencies of Onondaga County to serve our
6 citizens with the help of Air 1. Thanks
7 for listening.

8 **RUTH BELTRAN:** Hi, my name is Ruth
9 Beltran and I am in the national League
10 of United Latin American Citizens, we
11 are also part of United Latin American
12 Citizens here in Syracuse, New York. I
13 am here to speak against the outsourcing
14 of the medical care in our jails. It is
15 really not to the best interests of our
16 community to allow a private For Profit
17 company to manage the health care, the
18 medical care of the people in our jails
19 and to make decisions regarding the
20 health care.

21 Let's not forget it's a For Profit
22 company. It will make the profit of
23 reporting issues more difficult, it will
24 have a negative impact in our community.
25 It will create somewhat of a hand-

1 Beltran

2 washing for the county. They will be
3 able to wash their hands of all the
4 problems that are occurring in the jail,
5 which as we all know are many of them
6 and plenty of them. Instead of looking
7 to outsource these services what we need
8 to be looking at is changing the
9 processes that are in place now. We
10 need to make an assessment of the
11 policies and procedures that we have in
12 the jail regarding the medical care and
13 then make changes, make an assessment of
14 what needs to be changed and change it.

15 The outsourcing of the medical care
16 just doesn't make sense because in
17 addition to having a negative impact in
18 our community it will also put 60 county
19 residents out of a job. And it will not
20 save the county any money. So I know we
21 are pressured and going through a
22 financial crisis right now but if it's
23 not going to save the county any money
24 why do it? Just for liability purposes?
25 Is that really the best interests of our

1 Beltran

2 community?

3 So I urge you today, to not
4 outsource the medical care. These are
5 individuals in our jail, they are not
6 animals, they are individuals that need
7 care. So instead of looking for another
8 company or someone else that we can
9 blame for the problems that we have in
10 the jail we need to be looking at
11 solutions, ways that we can change the
12 processes, ways that we can have people
13 not going to our jails and be dead two
14 days later and then we just say oops I
15 don't know what happened.

16 Those are the solutions that we need
17 to be looking at -- the problems that we
18 need to be looking at. It's really mind
19 blowing for me that I live in the
20 community where you can actually be
21 locked up, and we know people go to jail
22 for different reasons. You might have a
23 bad day and snap, it happens for
24 different reasons, and you can actually
25 be dead. I'm a parent, I'm a parent, my

1 Sheriff Walsh

2 son is not old enough but I'm thinking,
3 can you imagine receiving that phone
4 call, your kid is dead, two days or less
5 after the police took him under custody?
6 Not mentioning that they cry and cry for
7 hours and were not provided the right
8 medical care. It's not that they were
9 silent, that it happened in their sleep,
10 they cried and cried for hours. So
11 instead of looking to outsource the
12 medical care in our jails let's look for
13 solutions. It will not save the county
14 any money, so really does it make sense?
15 Thank you for your time.

16 **SHERIFF KEVIN WALSH:** Mr. Chairman,
17 members of the Legislature this is the
18 first time in my 16 years as Sheriff
19 that I've spoken at a public hearing on
20 budget. I've always thought that it's
21 the public time for input. But these
22 are unusual times. And I need to be
23 here personally to tell you how deeply
24 these cuts are going to affect our
25 operations. Never before has the

1 Sheriff Walsh

2 Sheriff's ability to provide public
3 safety been so threatened as it has been
4 by the budget that you are considering.

5 While we recognize the significant
6 financial problems that we're all
7 facing, a budget leaves us a full 29
8 police deputy positions less than we had
9 in 2009. That's unacceptable to us.
10 And I believe it's going to be
11 unacceptable to the public that we
12 serve. 17 of those 29 positions are
13 currently vacant. A function of our
14 budgetary situation and the recent
15 retirement incentives.

16 But let me clarify the misconception
17 that you are only eliminating vacant
18 positions. There are 12 positions that
19 are currently filled. These are real
20 people with real families to support,
21 with real mortgages to pay, with real
22 commitments to our community. As a
23 matter of fact four of those people that
24 you're talking about are the ones that
25 you asked to have here tonight in the

1 Sheriff Walsh

2 Impact Program to provide security for
3 this budget hearing. These people
4 represent hundreds of thousands times
5 12, perhaps millions of dollars in
6 investment. An investment in their
7 background investigations, polygraph and
8 psychological testings, their 26 weeks
9 of police academy training followed by
10 18 weeks of field officer training,
11 their salaries and their benefits. But
12 more importantly they represent a loss
13 to our county that cannot be measured in
14 dollars alone.

15 In addition to the untenable loss of
16 police positions this budget proposal
17 calls for the end of our Air 1
18 helicopter program, combined with an
19 ill-conceived plan to sell the ship for
20 one time revenue. Air 1 is another
21 proposed loss of services in this
22 community that cannot be measured in
23 dollars alone. Now, I will not reiterate
24 all the reasons that the ship is vital
25 to our community. We covered those

1 Sheriff Walsh

2 thoroughly in the initial budget
3 presentation, every legislator has
4 received a copy of the Air 1 DVD.

5 I would just like tonight to let you
6 to hear that there are some
7 misconceptions that need to be cleared
8 up. First off, it is not a million tax
9 dollars that are spent on Air 1 as the
10 headlines would have us believe. The
11 county cost is actually 6 to \$700,000
12 depending on the number of flight hours
13 that we have scheduled for any given
14 year. And it's not just 7 medical
15 flights with 1,418 missions, of which 24
16 were medical transports that saved lives.

17 Secondly, the Air 1 sale gimmick. A
18 quick look at the internet will show you
19 there is a glut of similar helicopters
20 for sale, making your projection of
21 getting \$1.8 million highly
22 questionable. Now such a time, one time
23 gimmick are more something that we tend
24 to see in the state budget proposals not
25 in a responsible Onondaga County budget.

1 Sheriff Walsh

2 What of the one time revenue, what's
3 going to happen once that one time
4 revenue does not come up to the \$1.8
5 million this year? Are you going to
6 take more police deputies to fill that
7 budget gap? And what about next year?

8 And finally, cars. We asked for 25
9 cars to keep on track for replacing
10 police vehicles that before they become
11 unsafe for emergency operation or become
12 a repair nightmare costing more to keep
13 them running than it would cost to buy
14 replacements. You cut all of our police
15 cars from the budget. Now Onondaga
16 County is a big place, 800 square miles.
17 We drive over 3 million miles a year
18 answering a hundred thousand calls for
19 police service.

20 If we have to wait until 2012's
21 budget to replace vehicles we will have
22 one-third of our marked police cars over
23 120,000 miles and 20 percent of our
24 marked patrol cars over 150,000 miles.
25 This is not safe, this is not

1 Sheriff Walsh

2 acceptable. At the very best replace
3 the police cars that are getting well
4 past their stated life cycle.

5 Now, the Onondaga County Executive
6 has called the Ways and Means budget
7 proposal irresponsible. I believe that
8 if we work together we can come up with
9 a plan that is much more responsible in
10 providing public safety to our citizens
11 that we all are sworn to serve.

12 I initially came to the table with
13 \$1.1 million in proposed cuts, and I'm
14 sure that if we work together we can
15 come up with a reasonable number that
16 will help meet your goals without
17 crippling our services. Gentlemen and
18 ladies of the Legislature I do not envy
19 the positions you are in. I fully
20 understand your concerns. You all know
21 that I once sat amongst your ranks
22 during one of the worst budget years the
23 county had ever faced up to that time.
24 We made hard decisions. But we did not
25 decimate the Sheriff's ability to

1 Simmons

2 provide for his constitutional mandate.
3 And that mandate is to keep the peace in
4 the county. The county recovered, times
5 got better, they will again. Don't
6 deprive this county of one its most
7 precious commodities, it's reputation as
8 a safe place to live and raise a family
9 thank you.

10 **MEL SIMMONS:** My name is Mel
11 Simmons, I'm the Commissioner of Fire
12 EMS for the Town of Otisco, I manage two
13 stations. My position is to oversee the
14 operation of those fire departments. I
15 look around this room tonight and I see
16 three of us in this room who were on the
17 original committee, the first committee
18 for the original Air 1 back 35 years
19 ago. We were appointed by the County
20 Executive to see the feasibility of this
21 ship. We met many times. We worked
22 hand in hand with the Legislature. At
23 that time there was 24 Legislators in
24 this county. After much research they
25 had the wisdom to purchase and fund this

1 Simmons

2 ship. When the final vote came down it
3 was 23 to one, one city legislator
4 refrained from voting. All right, that
5 was 35 years ago. There must have been
6 some merit to this ship.

7 One of the things I would like to
8 take issue with you tonight is in the
9 paper you made reference that Mercy
10 Flight could do many of the chores that
11 Air 1 does. I just want to say that
12 this is like comparing apples to oranges.
13 And I want to make it perfectly clear
14 that it cannot happen, all right? Mercy
15 Flight does not have the ability to do
16 search and rescue. Mercy Flight does
17 not have the ability to have ground
18 communications with all of the police,
19 fire and EMS workers on the ground.
20 They do not have a high powered search
21 light. They do not have infrared. They
22 do not have the ability to pull up
23 floaters out of these lakes on these
24 overturned boats. They don't have the
25 ability to pick up ice fishermen on

1 Simmons

2 Oneida Lake. Mercy Flight also does not
3 have the capability of a Bambi bucket to
4 help the fire in their brush fires.
5 They also do not have the full
6 capability to protect our fire, police,
7 EMS and municipal workers in the time of
8 crisis, all right?

9 Lastly, I would think that this
10 Legislature should have the foresight as
11 our forefathers did when they put this
12 Constitution together of the United
13 States to look ahead and see the future
14 of this ship and what it can do. And I
15 recommend that you strongly reinstate
16 and support this thing. Thank you.

17 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Manny Falcone,
18 County Volunteer Firemen's; Denise
19 Dirienzo, Landmark Chief; Frank Fowler,
20 Syracuse police and Sherry Mossotti with
21 Leadership Greater Syracuse.

22 **MANNY FALCONE:** Thank you, my name
23 is Manny Falcone, I am the president of
24 the Onondaga County Firemen's Association.
25 I'm also the town Supervisor in the Town

1 Falcone

2 of Geddes. I reside in Lakeland and I
3 work for the village of Solvay. I've
4 been a firefighter for the Lakeside Fire
5 Department for over 30 years and chief
6 there for 12. My comments are on Air 1.

7 Once again the citizens of Onondaga
8 County including the city of Syracuse
9 have the potential of losing one of the
10 most valuable life saving tools that the
11 public safety section can provide. The
12 Onondaga County Legislators present here
13 tonight seek an easy mark to reduce the
14 deficit. In the upcoming year's county
15 budget the target they once again
16 painted on our helicopter commonly known
17 as Air 1, is bigger than ever before.
18 It's an easy mark for the Legislators
19 because it's big dollar item in the
20 budget, and eliminating it would make
21 the job of balancing the budget much
22 easier.

23 Meanwhile the Onondaga County Fire
24 Coalition which consists of ranking
25 officials from the Onondaga County Fire

1 Falcone

2 Chiefs Association, the Onondaga County
3 Firemen's Association, the Onondaga
4 County Fire Police Association, and the
5 Central Region Fire District Association
6 find it necessary to express their
7 extreme concern over the subject of
8 grounding Air 1. This concern is not a
9 selfish concern either. It should be a
10 concern of every citizen, resident and
11 visitor to our county. This includes
12 all of you present in this room tonight,
13 as well as the men and women of our
14 Legislature, their neighbors and yes,
15 even their families.

16 We in the fire and EMS officials
17 know all too well how valuable the
18 sheriff's helicopter has been for the
19 over 35 years it's been in operation.
20 We have witnessed numerous rescues
21 performed over the many lakes, rivers,
22 forests and rural terrain and the life
23 saving accomplishment in transporting
24 critically injured from rural sections
25 of Onondaga County to our area hospitals

Falcone

1
2 in a timely fashion. This helicopter
3 has numerous other assets, including the
4 ability to lift 1,000 pounds of water in
5 a special firefighting bucket to
6 extinguish fires not easily accessible
7 to firefighters, as an airborne search
8 vessel for missing persons.

9 The other end of the spectrum
10 involves one Air 1 capability is the
11 tool for the police and the public
12 safety, your public safety. Think very
13 seriously about this, do you want to
14 lose the peace of mind of knowing that
15 if a disaster were to strike in any
16 number of ways to you or to a loved one
17 you wouldn't know if this would be
18 available, one of our most valuable
19 tools to come to your immediate
20 assistance.

21 Who is to know if future rescue can
22 involve you, your friends, neighbor or
23 even a family member. Our Legislators
24 need to hear it and hear it now, that's
25 tonight. Mr. Rhinehart, Mr. Lesniak and

Falcone/Dirienzo

1
2 Mr. Stanczyk, the fire service of
3 Onondaga County is here tonight to tell
4 you, your fellow Legislators, that we
5 are so much opposed to your proposal of
6 eliminating Air 1 from the 2011 Onondaga
7 County budget proposal, we urge you to
8 reconsider and find an alternate way to
9 reduce your proposed budget without
10 affecting public safety of every soul in
11 Onondaga County. All of us hope that we
12 will never have to call upon the
13 services of Air 1 but if you, the
14 Legislature, eliminate it from the
15 budget none of us will have that option.
16 Thank you.

17 **DENISE DIRIENZO:** I'm Denise
18 Dirienzo, the executive director of the
19 landmark Theater, also a life long
20 resident of Onondaga County, and a
21 taxpayer in the Town of Pompey. So I
22 certainly understand what we're all
23 going through this year as residents and
24 decision makers.

25 I'm here about the stage house

Dirienzo

1
2 expansion of the Landmark Theatre to ask
3 to please keep the contingency item in
4 the budget this year. We are set to
5 expand the stage house of the theatre
6 next week. We shut down our stage May
7 1st, removed all of the stage goods. We
8 are closed for business and moving
9 forward.

10 We have a commitment letter from a
11 consortium of local banks, we have hired
12 our general contractor, architect,
13 acquired the necessary property and
14 spent a million and-a-half dollars to
15 get to this point. It's going to be a
16 year of construction and then we reopen
17 to the benefit of all the county, to
18 have diverse offerings, to have more
19 entertainment, to bring more residents
20 downtown, of Onondaga County and to
21 bring other county residents in to have
22 an economic impact.

23 We currently had a 14 million
24 dollars impact in 2009. We're looking
25 to double that. That translates into

Dirienzo/Fowler

1
2 people coming downtown to eat, coming
3 downtown to see the show, to have
4 cocktails, to stay at hotels, it
5 increases and generates revenue for the
6 county.

7 I ask that you please keep this in,
8 and help us stay alive. Without
9 continuing and moving forward with our
10 expansion slated for next week the
11 Landmark Theatre will close. We have a
12 contingency with our bank loan, for our
13 contingency with the county, a lot of
14 contingencies here. If we do not move
15 forward, if that does not happen, we
16 have no ability to generate revenues.
17 It takes a year to book a show. So
18 please keep the Landmark Theatre in
19 downtown, please keep Salina Street
20 moving towards revitalization, thank you.

21 **CHIEF FRANK FOWLER:** Good evening,
22 my name is Frank Fowler, I'm the Chief
23 of Police for the City of Syracuse and
24 I'm here tonight to speak or to ask you
25 to please reconsider getting rid of Air

1 Chief Fowler

2 1 and reducing the sheriff's department.

3 As the Chief of Police for the City
4 of Syracuse we depend very heavily upon
5 Air 1. I am averaging a gun a day,
6 recovering a gun a day from the streets
7 of the city of Syracuse. Our streets
8 are becoming increasingly more
9 dangerous. We rely very heavily upon
10 Air 1 to provide air support for our
11 police officers who are chasing these
12 armed gunmen through the back yards of
13 the city of Syracuse. And without that
14 helicopter we have to place human beings
15 in harms way. It is extremely important
16 to us.

17 We keep hearing the word consolida-
18 tion and cooperation. Our sheriff's
19 department and the city of Syracuse
20 enjoy a great working relationship. And
21 that's demonstrated on a daily, weekly
22 basis through Operation Impact.
23 Operation Impact is a very vital
24 resource to the city of Syracuse. And
25 you will find this year that because of

1 Chief Fowler

2 Operation Impact you're going to see a
3 reduction in Part 1 crimes throughout
4 Onondaga County. That's not something
5 that's happened by accident. It's
6 because our men and women out there are
7 working extremely hard each and every
8 day to not only keep the city safe but
9 to keep our entire county safe.

10 And let's talk about our men and
11 women. I heard the Sheriff say that
12 this reduction in force would include
13 positions that are occupied by sheriff's
14 now. Which means we're talking about
15 getting rid of the ones who have just
16 graduated from the academy, gone through
17 their FTO program. These are the ones
18 we would have to lay off. I would like
19 for you to really maybe even take a look
20 at some of them who are in the room
21 tonight, look into their eyes. This is
22 what we've asked for these people to do.
23 We brought them from the job, because
24 when we go to hire, myself and the
25 Sheriff, we're looking for the best.

1 Chief Fowler

2 We're looking for the upper echelon of
3 the work force environment. They're
4 already employed some place, someone
5 else would like to hire them too.
6 That's what we're looking for.

7 So we ask for them to offer their
8 lives. And we include their family in
9 it. We ask their family to turn them
10 over to us, to go out and do this very
11 dangerous job. So for 26 weeks they go
12 through rigorous training, day in and
13 day out because they want to become law
14 enforcement officers. They graduate, go
15 through a tough FTO program, then they
16 get indoctrinated into the sheriff's
17 department or their respective law
18 enforcement agencies.

19 They go out day in and day out and
20 risk their lives. Their family members
21 kiss them good night, they leave to go
22 to work. The only job, one of the only,
23 few jobs where you kiss your loved one
24 good bye and when they go to work there
25 is an opportunity they may not return

1 Chief Fowler/Mossotti

2 that night. Each and every night day in
3 and day out they make a sacrifice, their
4 family makes a sacrifice. So we're
5 sitting here tonight going forward in
6 our way of saying thank you to them is
7 to say that they're not going to be
8 employed anymore?

9 So I'd like for you to really
10 reconsider that when you look into the
11 eyes of these law enforcement officers.
12 You think about the sacrifice that
13 they're making and what we're going to
14 be faced with if we choose to lay them
15 off. Thank you.

16 **SHERRY MOSSOTTI:** Good evening, my
17 name is Sherry Mossotti, executive
18 director of Leadership Greater Syracuse.
19 Several weeks ago when this county
20 budget hearing was actually announced I
21 put the date on my calendar immediately.
22 And I was excited and enthused to be
23 able to come here and talk about the
24 good work this organization and many of
25 our arts and culture organizations do

1 Mossotti

2 for our community.

3 As some of you may know, Leadership
4 Greater Syracuse was founded back in
5 1990 by Nicholas Pirro and the County of
6 Onondaga Legislators just like you,
7 mayor Tom Young and others, with the
8 intent of getting people actively
9 involved in their community to make a
10 difference. We all know that getting
11 people involved is what drives this
12 community. It retains our young talent.
13 It builds the community and its work
14 force that we are all so very proud of.
15 After all what is a town, a village, a
16 community without its people?

17 Over the past several days several
18 of our Leadership Greater Syracuse
19 alumni, board and supporters, have
20 reached out to our Legislators to
21 express their concern over the proposed
22 cuts to arts and culture. We're one of
23 those cuts. We at Leadership Greater
24 Syracuse know that we can't rely on
25 government funding forever. We take the

1 Mossotti

2 use of county tax dollars very seriously.
3 Over the past eight years Leadership
4 Greater Syracuse's reliance on county
5 funds has gone from \$25,000 back in 2001
6 to 9,400 in 2010. That's a 62 percent
7 decrease in support from our county.
8 While the city has maintained its level
9 of support and believes in the work that
10 we do.

11 Now we've managed to make up those
12 funds during an extremely difficult
13 economy. And to hold our own with a
14 very, barely break even bottom line most
15 of those years. In fact we were even
16 working toward weaning our small
17 non-profit agency away from government
18 funding within the next two to three
19 years, but Legislators, to go from
20 \$9,400 today to zero is a paralyzing
21 blow. It will threaten this organiza-
22 tion's existence. And that scares me.

23 We as in years prior have antici-
24 pated the cuts, but I'll tell you we
25 never anticipated a hundred percent cut.

1 Mossotti

2 If you hear nothing else I say tonight I
3 ask you to listen to this piece, this is
4 very important. Several Legislators
5 have told our alum, our board members,
6 our supporters and many of these great
7 organizations and their supporters who
8 have written to you, that agencies like
9 Leadership Greater Syracuse will be
10 funded either by the Cultural Resources
11 Trust or the Onondaga Civic Development
12 Corp. Don't worry.

13 I will tell you and many of us have
14 done this, after speaking with both of
15 these organizations I have learned that
16 many of these organizations don't meet
17 the funding criteria of those two
18 organizations. There have been no
19 discussions with the boards of these
20 funds who ultimately determine who is
21 funded to ensure that this is a viable
22 option for these agencies on the cutting
23 block.

24 The OCDC and the CRT are going
25 through changes that will affect funding

1 Mossotti

2 criteria, which many of us may or may
3 not be able to take advantage of. And
4 we may become ineligible for those
5 funds. As one legislator put it very
6 eloquently in his response to one of our
7 alum -- has the legislative body checked
8 to verify whether our organization and
9 these organizations, the CRT and OCDC,
10 as quoted as places that authorized
11 agencies our funding will be shifted to,
12 have they even checked the legal
13 authority to fund these organizations
14 being cut?

15 So instead of being here tonight,
16 which I always look forward to, to tell
17 you of the great work of this
18 organization and the many organizations
19 you heard from tonight, instead of being
20 here to tell you how nearly 1,000 LGS
21 alum and graduates actively serving in
22 over 350 non-profit educational and
23 governmental agencies serving Onondaga
24 County citizens because of LGS. How
25 this year alone LGS has been instrumental

Mossotti

1
2 in connecting over 150 grads to needs in
3 the community and non-profit boards,
4 county, towns, villages, school boards
5 and Task Forces because of this
6 organization. About the new Political
7 Leadership Institute we implemented this
8 year with 150 percent more applicants
9 than we'd hoped for in its inaugural
10 year because of LGS.

11 About the project that each
12 graduating class since the year 2001 has
13 undertaken as a result of the graduation
14 from to direct benefit of this county
15 from building a home, to implementing a
16 community-wide marketing campaign during
17 the holiday season when people are home
18 visiting their families. What a great
19 time to reinforce the message that this
20 is a great place to live.

21 To adopting poverty ridden schools,
22 to educating community leaders about
23 Onondaga Lake clean-up and the wonderful
24 history of the lake. I can go on and on
25 about some amazing projects that the

Mossotti

1 graduates of this organization take on
2 every single year as a result of their
3 experience. And these are all wonderful
4 things. They're well worth the \$9,400
5 that LGS is receiving in county funding
6 and well beyond.

7
8 That I will just have to gloss over
9 tonight, in an effort to encourage our
10 lawmakers to look into and talk to those
11 very organizations that you're telling
12 that your constituents will fund the
13 many agencies that are presently on the
14 budget chopping block. I know these
15 decisions are difficult, I make them
16 every day running a small non-profit
17 with three people. I implore you to
18 really consider the impact on our
19 non-profit, much of which you heard
20 tonight. And more importantly to be
21 absolutely sure that the cuts that you
22 are making can in fact be supported by
23 those very organizations the CRT and the
24 OCDC, that you're telling us and you're
25 telling your constituents will make up

Mossotti

1
2 the difference and save many of these
3 organizations.

4 You know \$9,400 to Leadership
5 Greater Syracuse is pennies of the
6 entire budget. But I can assure you
7 that the thousand alumni graduates, the
8 hundreds of organizations that these
9 civic minded individuals help to lead
10 and grow, and the many many Onondaga
11 County residents who benefit from the
12 work of Leadership Greater Syracuse and
13 its alum, it is worth every penny of
14 that \$9,400 investment to the people of
15 this county. Thank you.

16 **UNIDENTIFIED MALE (1):** I rise to
17 impart a privilege. Will you maintain
18 the 3 minutes on the speakers please or
19 have a timer, if you don't have one I'll
20 volunteer my time.

21 **UNIDENTIFIED MALE (2):** Second that.
22 **CHAIRMAN JORDAN:** We're asking
23 people to be courteous of other
24 speakers. There is a number of
25 speakers. We hate to have to cut people

Fittipaldi

1
2 off, so I guess we're giving people some
3 liberties, not holding them strictly to
4 that exactly 3 minutes. I certainly
5 would ask all the speakers to be
6 cognizant of the fact there are many
7 speakers who want to speak tonight and
8 to make every effort to try to keep your
9 discussions to the 3 minute limit, thank
10 you.

11 **UNIDENTIFIED MALE (1):** Also, while
12 I'm up, is it possible to turn the heat
13 up a little bit?

14 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** So noted. Don
15 Fittipaldi, Citizen of Camillus. Dick
16 Donovan, Mayor of Minoa. Stephanie
17 Nadeau and Mike waters.

18 **DON FITTIPALDI:** Don Fittipaldi, 115
19 Hawthorn Drive, Camillus, New York.
20 Gentlemen, Honorable members of the
21 Legislature, I come before you tonight
22 as a 43 year taxpayer and homeowner in
23 the Town of Camillus. I would like to
24 address the sales component in the
25 budget. In the past towns in Onondaga

1 Fittipaldi

2 County have elected to take their shares
3 of a sales tax revenue as a credit
4 against the county property tax. In
5 this way the town tax levies have been
6 segregated from the county levy
7 affording the taxpayers transparency
8 relative to any tax increases or
9 decreases and no doubt in their mind who
10 to call and what level of government to
11 question any changes.

12 Sales tax and the property tax are
13 commingled in the final budget. The
14 formula for each has been based on
15 different foundation and for good
16 reason. The property tax formula is
17 based on individual assessment of real
18 property market value. We all
19 understand that and we are advised of
20 the rate per thousand dollars of
21 assessed valuation in our tax bills.

22 The sales tax portion of the formula
23 has always been based on population,
24 also for good reasons. First of all, it
25 has nothing to do with real property.

1 Fittipaldi

2 Second, it's based on retail sales
3 transactions which for the most part
4 take place in the most populated and
5 developed towns. Those populations are
6 most responsible for those sales and
7 transactions as well as maintaining the
8 utilities and roads, utilities and
9 infrastructure to support the retail
10 centers for both local and transient
11 shoppers. Thus, those revenues and
12 taxes are generated in the most
13 developed suburban towns. The more
14 rural and bedroom towns take advantage
15 of those facilities with the attendant
16 cost associated with them.

17 Knowing these facts we had no reason
18 to fear a change in the county's
19 procedures relative to collecting the
20 sales tax revenue and holding same from
21 the outset. Not until the disparate
22 increases in the county property taxes
23 were published was anyone out here aware
24 of the change in the basis for sales tax
25 from population based to a municipal

1 Donovan

2 assessed valuation base. Again, sales
3 tax has nothing to do with real property
4 assessments. People generate sales tax.

5 If, as I have been told, these tax
6 increases are due to unfunded state and
7 federal mandates of 50 plus million
8 dollars, that would account for less
9 than 5 percent increase in the budget
10 and that could be easily explained.

11 These enormous projected increases are
12 unconscionable and singularly a result
13 of changing the way the sales tax
14 revenues are shared, causing county
15 property tax to rise.

16 I submit, that if this change had
17 not been implemented we would not be
18 here tonight. The Legislature could be
19 doing the work we elected them to do in
20 their chambers and the rest of us could
21 be out earning a living to pay our
22 taxes. Please rectify this ill advised
23 change. Thank you.

24 **DICK DONOVAN:** Good everyone, Dick
25 Donovan, president of the Onondaga

1 Donovan

2 County Mayors Association and the Mayor
3 of the Village of Minoa. I'm here
4 tonight to reiterate from the County
5 Mayors Association their affirmative
6 vote for Air 1. On September 15th as an
7 organization, keeping in mind that the
8 villages representative are the outlying
9 areas in this county. Air 1 is a
10 critical vehicle, as has been discussed
11 earlier for all our emergency services.

12 On behalf of the Village of Minoa, and I
13 sent the resolution to Chairman
14 Rhinehart, our village board on the 20th
15 of September unanimously supports Air 1.

16 From a personal standpoint I've been
17 a volunteer fireman in the past, an EMT
18 and now as a 21 year veteran of the
19 elected side of things I've experienced
20 in all the different venues the use of
21 Air 1. It is critical. I can't
22 emphasize that enough. And in searches,
23 in high speed chases, there is just no
24 other way to achieve what that vehicle
25 can do. And I know times are tough, we

1 Nadeau

2 have to find a better way than to do
3 away with Air 1. Thank you.

4 **STEPHANIE NADEAU:** Good evening, my
5 name is Stephanie Nadeau, I'm 22 years
6 old and a college student in Onondaga
7 County. I speak to you tonight on
8 behalf of myself as well as many of my
9 peers who are the future of Onondaga
10 County who could not be here tonight.
11 When thinking of why I chose to stay in
12 Syracuse to pursue my degree there is
13 also the comfort of having family and
14 friends nearby and of course saving
15 money by commuting.

16 But what truly makes myself and many
17 of my peers stay is the rich diversity
18 Onondaga has always provided in music,
19 arts and culture. We haven't had a need
20 to go out there. To be surrounded by
21 the quality of theatre, the variety of
22 expression and the heart rendering in
23 the music we are fortunate enough to
24 have here shows the true life force and
25 very fold of Central New York. To

1 Nadeau

2 experience the incredible magic of the
3 stage and the ability to transport you
4 to a different world for even just a
5 moment as the reprieve from the
6 hardships of life. This is something
7 that we thrive on and simply cannot be
8 without.

9 One of the most beautiful things
10 about the arts in Central New York is
11 how they're not just these lowly
12 institutions of professionals, they
13 reach out to the community, they reach
14 out to the youth. When I was in high
15 school my Italian class was given
16 tickets to a preview of the Marriage of
17 Figaro that Syracuse Opera had done. It
18 was a chance for us to not only get to
19 experiment with our comprehension of the
20 different language but to broaden our
21 minds and truly experience art in the
22 purest form.

23 The Aria Society makes attending
24 performances affordable for college
25 students. Syracuse and Central New York

1 Nadeau

2 brings in students from all over and is
3 constantly being told it's the main goal
4 of Central New York to keep its
5 students, to keep the people that it's
6 educating and preparing to have them go
7 into the work force here and enrich this
8 community.

9 Last night I received an e-mail from
10 Syracuse Opera. To say that it left me
11 in shock and made me ill is a gross
12 understatement. To hear that funding
13 would be eliminated from such invaluable
14 assets to our city as Syracuse Opera,
15 Syracuse Stage, the Red House and the
16 many other affected is giving a death
17 sentence to the heart of Onondaga
18 County.

19 To cultures across the world and
20 across time, music has been held in the
21 highest regard. To the ancient Greeks
22 Musica Mundana was the force of the
23 universe, which science later discovered
24 actually is musical and vibrates to a
25 pitch low B flat, which that's what a

1 Nadeau

2 lot is attuned to.

3 Musica Humana was that light force
4 that makes us human. And every person
5 here can feel that internal music in the
6 beat of our hearts. It's what keeps us
7 alive. Musica Instrumentalis, the music
8 that you feel and hear inspires to
9 achieve the greatness of the others. I
10 truly believe that Syracuse Opera has
11 achieved that. To attend a performance
12 is not only to be moved deeply but it
13 gives us hope. It gives us hope that
14 there is still beauty in this world and
15 inspires us to create such beauty.

16 In times such as these the financial
17 difficulties, violence and so much
18 hatred in the world how can we afford to
19 risk losing something that inspires us
20 to be something greater? Nothing can
21 touch us so deeply as music. Everyone
22 in here has a song that makes them smile
23 every time they hear it. A song that we
24 seek out to solicit the joy whenever we
25 are down. Think of what song that might

Waters

1
2 be to you and how it makes you feel.
3 And now imagine never being able to
4 experience that again.

5 To lose the arts is to lose our
6 future, is to lose our life force and
7 what keeps us human. Please, please
8 give us back our hope and Syracuse Opera.

9 **MIKE WATERS:** Honorable members of
10 the County Legislate, I'm Mike Waters, a
11 life long resident of the Town of Dewitt
12 and volunteer firefighter in the village
13 of Jordan. I respectfully request your
14 support for the continued operation of
15 Air 1, the sheriff's office helicopter.

16 As a 50 years veteran of the fire
17 service, including volunteer civilian,
18 United States Air Force military and 29
19 plus years at the Onondaga County fire
20 coordinator, I feel I have sufficient
21 insight and practical experience to
22 offer a very strong statement of support
23 for this program.

24 I have personally witnessed and been
25 involved with life saving operations

Waters

1
2 that were successful because of the
3 response of properly and adequately
4 trained fire, police and EMS personnel;
5 events that would have had a tragic
6 result without Air 1.

7 The Air 1 program is a model of
8 cooperation that is rare in many
9 municipalities. Its capabilities are
10 available upon request from any public
11 safety official in Onondaga County,
12 including the city of Syracuse. And
13 amazing as it may seem, there's been no
14 abuse of this service. There are strict
15 protocols in place that provide guidance
16 on how, when and where it should be used.

17 One might ask how many heart attacks
18 have been prevented because Air 1 was
19 able to transport firefighters to remote
20 locations in the county rather than have
21 them hiking with all their equipment or
22 because Air 1 was able to douse a brush
23 fire with the Bambi bucket.

24 I can relate an incident where Air 1
25 was the difference between life and

Waters

1
2 death for firefighters, and another that
3 saved a municipality thousands of
4 dollars. The first was the fire that
5 destroyed the Syroco plant in
6 Baldwinsville. An Onondaga County
7 deputy fire coordinator who you heard
8 from earlier was aboard Air 1 as it flew
9 over the blazing factory. Only with the
10 use of the forward-looking infrared
11 system on the aircraft was the deputy
12 fire coordinator able to determine the fire
13 was traveling underneath the steel
14 decking of the roof, creating an
15 imminent danger to firefighters working
16 there. Because of this resource all
17 firefighters were able to exit the roof
18 in a safe and timely manner.

19 In the other case that immediately
20 comes to mind a fire within the sealed
21 landfill in the Town of Onondaga
22 presented the possibility of having to
23 destroy the entire top seal to locate
24 and extinguish the fire. Replacement of
25 which would have been very expensive.

Waters

1
2 Again, through the use of a FLIR the
3 fire department was able to see exactly
4 where the fire was burning and pierce
5 patchable holes to apply water and
6 extinguish the fire.

7 On a financial note, I spent many
8 hours aboard Air 1 photographing
9 devastation of the Labor Day storm. I
10 was informed by then Deputy County
11 Administrator for physical services, Jim
12 Albanese, that those photographs were
13 key to the county documenting
14 infrastructure damage and receiving more
15 than \$300,000 in federal relief funds.

16 Having more than 30 years of
17 military experience, including flights
18 in many different kinds of helicopters,
19 including search and rescue operations
20 in Iceland and the Mediterranean Sea, I
21 can attest to what is required to
22 achieve the outstanding results, and
23 equally important the safety record of
24 Air 1.

25 Statistics clearly show that the

Waters

1
 2 safety records of commercial medi-vac
 3 helicopter services, including those
 4 that operate locally, indicate a dis-
 5 turbing number of crashes. The reason
 6 is quite simple. If the government
 7 helicopter is not flying it's saving
 8 money. If the commercial service isn't
 9 flying it's not producing revenue. The
 10 commercial services tend to have more
 11 flights in marginal weather, may scrimp
 12 on preventative maintenance, and respond
 13 to calls where their intervention is not
 14 for a life or death situation. And
 15 those that purport to be not-for-profit
 16 may be otherwise.

17 There is potential to save millions
 18 on public safety in Onondaga County.
 19 There is and has been for years too much
 20 fire apparatus, and lately fire
 21 departments are building castles for
 22 fire stations. There is a terrible
 23 waste with duplication of services in
 24 police services. I applaud the county
 25 legislature for the recent sales tax

Waters

1
 2 distribution. And I noted from Mrs.
 3 Buerkle's release on the news what the
 4 county taxpayers are paying for debt
 5 service for such things. The waste is
 6 in the towns and villages not the
 7 sheriff's office. That's where the belt
 8 tightening needs to take place. While
 9 the general population may be willing to
 10 support this extravagance with their
 11 votes; those that pay the most taxes,
 12 business and industry, can only vote
 13 with their feet, and leave.

14 I urge you to rethink and support
 15 the Air 1 program. Sale of the
 16 helicopter would be one more one-time
 17 budget gimmick. The ship is paid for
 18 and revenue from a sale would be
 19 insignificant in the overall financial
 20 picture, and waste years of training and
 21 experience. Thank you.

22 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: My name is --

23 VICE CHAIR CORBETT: Excuse me:

24 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: God bless
 25 America and Mr. Walsh and the jail house

Martin

1
 2 you got a lot of people. God bless you
 3 but the only thing I'm going to say one
 4 more thing, may God bless us working
 5 outside and inside of the meeting. God
 6 bless us, the chief, the sheriff, you
 7 guys are great, intelligent, asking
 8 help. When they ask me, help me, but
 9 how can you guys kill your own citizens
 10 outside and inside the jail? That's not
 11 the American way. May God bless
 12 America.

13 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Okay for the
 14 party crasher. Larry Martin from OCSA;
 15 Don Colon needs no introduction; Derek
 16 Ford, Answer Coalition; and Toby Shelly.

17 **LARRY MARTIN:** Good evening, my name
 18 is Larry Martin, I'm on the Executive
 19 Board for the Onondaga County Deputy
 20 Sheriff's Police Association. I've been
 21 a member of the sheriff's office for the
 22 past 24 proud years.

23 It shocks me to think that members
 24 of this Legislature, some members are
 25 recommending elimination of almost 30

Martin

1
 2 members of the Sheriff's Police Union
 3 and our life saving helicopter. I can
 4 only assume that members of the
 5 Legislature may not be fully aware of
 6 the scope of what OCSO members provide
 7 the community. I'd like to take a
 8 moment to point out some of our
 9 highlights.

10 Besides our normal policing duties,
 11 police agencies from around the state
 12 depend on our department for training
 13 and certification requirements. Our
 14 agency's K9 unit developed the New York
 15 State standards for K9 training which
 16 are in place today. And we've taught
 17 basic K9 16 week school and required
 18 maintenance training to the benefit of
 19 over 55 K9 teams in New York State.

20 SWAT units from across the state
 21 send their officers to our SWAT academy.
 22 Our agency was involved in establishing
 23 statewide standards for SWAT training
 24 and recently held the first pilot
 25 academy here in Onondaga County.

1 Martin

2 Besides handling our own county reported
3 emergencies our SWAT members have been
4 relied upon to settle emergency
5 situations for the FBI, the DEA and the
6 US Marshal's to name a few. These
7 federal agencies know that we can
8 mobilize a professional force and
9 effectively to resolve dangerous
10 incidents.

11 In preparation for tonight I read a
12 letter prepared by one of my younger
13 colleagues, which I believe most of the
14 Legislators have received by e-mail. He
15 highlighted the many dangers we face
16 daily at our current staffing levels.
17 I'm now trying to imagine our members
18 attempting to handle these dangers and
19 the ever increasing volume of calls with
20 29 less members and without our eye in
21 the sky Air 1, which makes almost every
22 situation safer. Vehicle pursuits can
23 loosen up with Air 1, resulting in fewer
24 accidents and suspects inability to out-
25 run the chopper. Lost children and

1 Martin

2 Alzheimer patients can quickly be
3 located by air before they get injured
4 or die the from the elements. A suspect
5 hiding in the dark can be identified
6 before he ambushes a deputy.

7 Our members have proudly been
8 providing police services to this county
9 since 1794. We are viewed by other
10 agencies in the state as a progressive
11 example of modern policing. We are who
12 they turn to to train on how to get it
13 right. 216 years of development to get
14 to the level of professionalism and
15 statewide respect where we stand today.
16 Your suggestion to slash us to a bare-
17 bones understaffed, less safe operation
18 is unacceptable and insulting to the
19 proud history which members of OCSPA
20 represent. You cannot balance a budget
21 at the expense of public safety. I'd
22 also like to thank the seven members
23 that have been asked to be here tonight
24 to provide security for this hearing.
25 And I truly hope that next year all of

1 Martin

2 you have jobs here. I truly do.
3 And also there's been a lot of
4 mention tonight about the Bambi bucket,
5 which is a fire fighting accessory on
6 the helicopter. Just to let everybody
7 know the sheriff's union, OCSPA,
8 purchased that. It wasn't purchased
9 with taxpayers dollars, we wanted to
10 give back to the community and that was
11 purchased a few years ago, that's the
12 kind of people we are considering to lay
13 off. Thank you.

14 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** When we had the
15 unannounced speaker I dropped the cards
16 and missed Marie Beaudette, if she's
17 here, was actually next after Mike
18 Waters, I apologize. Is Marie here?
19 Okay next is Don Colon and then Derrick

20 **DONALD COLON:** Good evening county
21 Legislators are we having fun yet? For
22 those of you, for the few of you who
23 don't know me, my name is Don Colon, I
24 served on this body for 19 years,
25 including 10 years as chair of the Ways

1 Colon

2 and Means Committee. And I then served
3 nine years as the county comptroller.
4 As the County Comptroller I processed
5 all the payrolls for the county. In
6 2007 my office created the payroll
7 positions for the newly hired people
8 starting January 1st, 2008. As she was
9 entitled to do under the County Charter
10 and rules, the County Executive slotted
11 all of her new hires on Grade G of their
12 appropriate salary step. This resulted
13 in an additional cost to the taxpayers
14 of about \$125,000 at that time. With
15 additional staff persons hired since
16 then the annual cost is probably in
17 excess of \$250,000. The Legislature
18 additionally increased the salary of the
19 County Attorney to an even higher grade
20 resulting in him making almost as much
21 as his former boss, the New York State
22 Attorney General. I know that the
23 Legislature was aware of this practice.
24 Did you not think you would ever have to
25 pay for it with taxes?

Colon

1
2 Two years ago you increased the
3 District Attorney's salary from the
4 \$125,000 it was when he was elected to
5 \$160,000. I know he deserves it but did
6 you not think you would ever have to pay
7 for it?

8 This year you passed the OCC budget.
9 I have been unable to find out the
10 President's salary but I believe it is
11 \$235,000 a year plus a housing allowance,
12 an automobile and a \$127,500 bonus if
13 she stays through 2015. This was in
14 addition to the \$750,000 entrance sign
15 paid from the current operating expenses
16 in 2009. Did you not think you would
17 ever have to pay for it?

18 And then we come to the coup de
19 grace, the sales tax agreement. There
20 is no argument that the county was in a
21 deep budgetary hole, partially due to
22 increased expenses over which you have
23 no control, and partially to recoup one
24 shots you used to balance last year's
25 budget. The partial solution is to

Colon

1
2 increase the county's share of the 4
3 percent sales tax, which after all is a
4 county tax, not a town, village or
5 school tax. However, only the villages,
6 schools, city and one town took the
7 sales tax as cash, the cash that the
8 county dearly needed. The rest was a
9 credit against the County property tax,
10 and as such a revenue offsetting the
11 size of the tax levy.

12 If you took all of the cash
13 available from the towns, schools,
14 villages and the non-statutory part of
15 the city's share you still would not
16 completely offset the \$55 million
17 deficit. So what was your solution?
18 You took the money from the towns over a
19 three year period, which had little
20 impact on the cash deficit because you
21 were already getting most of the money
22 as a credit against the tax levy. Then
23 several of the towns, to be spiteful,
24 and I emphasize that word, took all of
25 the money they could get as cash,

Colon

1
2 further compounding the problem. You
3 then gave the money back to the
4 villages, the schools and the city,
5 which they will receive through the end
6 of the agreement, and are dollars you
7 could have used to offset your problem.
8 Then you changed the distribution from
9 population to ad valorem, even further
10 compounding the problem. The results
11 are astronomical increases in county tax
12 rates in the towns. Did you have a clue
13 that this would be the result of your
14 actions?

15 Now to get out of this mess that you
16 have created you're using one shots,
17 revenue pumps and raiding fund balance.
18 How do you plan on dealing with that
19 self created mess when you do the 2012
20 budget a year from now?

21 Thank you for your time. I do not
22 thank you for reducing my tax rate
23 increase from 74 percent to only 30
24 percent, because it is still too high.
25 And I do not thank the Town of Lysander

Ford

1
2 board for taking the million dollars
3 plus of sales tax in cash, which is part
4 of the reason behind the 30 percent
5 increase. I guess the good news is that
6 they and the other towns doing the same
7 thing are not only showing their greed
8 but they're demonstrating why the county
9 perhaps should not have shared sales tax
10 with them at all.

11 **DEREK FORD:** My name is Derrick Ford
12 I'm with the ANSWER Coalition, it's Act
13 Now to Stop War and End Racism. And I'm
14 also a worker and a native of Syracuse.
15 ANSWER is also part of the United as One
16 Coalition, which is an organization
17 formed around increasing accountability
18 in law enforcement in Syracuse and
19 Onondaga County.

20 I would like to say that we're
21 outraged at the proposal to privatize
22 the medical and mental health care
23 provided in the quote unquote Justice
24 Center jail. This is a budget hearing
25 and as Ruth pointed out, and I think

Ford

1
 2 it's appropriate to note that the
 3 proposal, you know, won't really save
 4 the county any money as of right now. I
 5 don't think there is any significant
 6 amount of money. I would say even if it
 7 were to save the county money, there are
 8 certain things which, you know are not
 9 commodities and not negotiable. The
 10 health of people is one of those
 11 certainly.

12 A primary thing that the privatiza-
 13 tion would do would be to decrease the
 14 county's liability for any deaths,
 15 injuries, mistreatment that occurs in
 16 the jail, which has been on the rise
 17 recently. Two deaths in the last year.
 18 Ruth talked about Chuniece Patterson,
 19 who was admitted in the Justice Center,
 20 had an ectopic pregnancy which is when
 21 the fetus attaches to the fallopian tube
 22 and she bled to death overnight.

23 There was also Raul Pinet, Jr., he
 24 was a 31 year old Puerto Rican man who
 25 was beaten by the police brutally. They

Ford

1
 2 said he was trespassing but you know, he
 3 had to have permission to enter the
 4 house, which he was supposedly
 5 trespassing. The woman whose house said
 6 that she was more afraid of the police
 7 than she was of Raul. Anyway, when he
 8 was admitted to the Justice Center,
 9 placed in a holding cell, 50 minutes
 10 later he was unconscious, he was later
 11 pronounced dead and the medical examiner
 12 ruled that death a homicide. The DA has
 13 not yet released that autopsy report,
 14 which is something we would also like to
 15 see done.

16 So you know, we would like to say
 17 that the people in the Justice Center
 18 jail, you know, most of those people are
 19 workers, many of workers without jobs,
 20 impacted by the economic crisis, right.
 21 You know, it's no -- it's not a radical
 22 statement to say that crime increases as
 23 poverty increases. Crime increases,
 24 especially violent crime. Last time
 25 there was a dramatic decrease in violent

Ford

1
 2 crime that was 1993, that was dramatic
 3 decrease in the unemployment rates. You
 4 know many of these people have not been
 5 convicted of a crime.

6 Raul and Chuniece, they weren't
 7 allowed to face, you know, they weren't
 8 allowed to receive a fair hearing, you
 9 know, because law enforcement officials
 10 basically decided that they were, you
 11 know, the judge, jury and executioner.

12 And privatization in general has
 13 never benefitted working people. The
 14 privatization of water, social services,
 15 you know, transportation, gas,
 16 electricity, parking meters, has never
 17 benefitted working people. The only
 18 thing it benefitted is the corporations
 19 that win the contracts. In this case
 20 corporations that are not even in
 21 Onondaga County. So you know, basically
 22 taking the county jobs, union jobs I
 23 believe, from this county.

24 So this is it, I mean you know, our
 25 basic contention here, you know, I would

Shelley

1
 2 like to submit these people are human
 3 beings, they're not valued with which
 4 you know, from which the private
 5 companies can extract a surplus, you
 6 know, and make a profit. I mean our
 7 health is not for sale essentially.
 8 Thank you.

9 **TOBY SHELLY:** My name is Toby Shelly,
 10 I'm from Otisco, that is in Onondaga
 11 County. I was told I only had a minute
 12 to speak now I've got three. I work for
 13 the sheriff's department, I'm a police
 14 supervisor on the road patrol, was a 26
 15 military veteran of the United States
 16 Air Force, Iraqi war veteran, I'm also a
 17 the deputy fire chief at the 174th
 18 Fighter Wing. I'm here to offer some
 19 solutions to the problems.

20 I think the main issue that I can
 21 see is a lack of funds in the budget. I
 22 don't think anybody is arguing that the
 23 helicopter isn't justified in the County
 24 Leg. I don't think anybody is arguing
 25 that the positions aren't justified,

1 Shelley

2 because we've had the helicopter for
3 years, we've had the positions for
4 years. People in front of me funded
5 that. So it was justified.

6 So how can we save some money to
7 keep those positions and keep that
8 helicopter? One thing I think we can
9 fix is the drive out take home car
10 program. And by fixing that we can
11 drive some waste out of the budget.
12 What I'm talking about is taking a look
13 at take home cars that have never
14 responded to off duty calls and bring
15 those back. By bringing those back we
16 can put a better schedule together for
17 the road patrol. By putting together a
18 better schedule it would decrease over-
19 time.

20 Something else we can do is
21 un-schedule scheduled overtime. For
22 example, in December 20th of 2009 the
23 Post Standard reported on some people
24 that got overtime, and the overtime was
25 in excess of their base pay. That

1 Shelley

2 should be un-scheduled. That would save
3 quite a bit of money.

4 Something else we can do is develop
5 a program to improve morale. Something
6 isn't in place at the moment we could
7 put it in place that would decrease sick
8 leave. If we decrease sick leave we'll
9 decrease overtime.

10 Something else we should be doing
11 that's not being done is a proactive
12 policy to prevent unnecessary deaths in
13 the jail. I believe better management
14 is the key to saving the jobs and saving
15 the helicopter. We should be sharpening
16 our pencils not using our red pens. I
17 invite the County Legislature and the
18 sheriff to look at my programs. Thank
19 you very much.

20 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Next four is
21 Donna Conklin, Jay Land, Dave Appleton
22 and Al Kalfass, I believe, with the Air
23 1 program.

24 **DONNA CONKLIN:** Hi, my name is Donna
25 Conklin, a resident here in Onondaga

1 Shelley

2 County since 1988. I'd like to take an
3 opportunity to air my concerns and views
4 of the proposal for the privatization of
5 medical services in the correctional
6 facilities in Onondaga County. I am a
7 registered nurse working full time in
8 the Justice Center. There are several
9 staff of that have five years and
10 greater with the county. We have been
11 working fully staffed until the reports
12 of the probability of a private company
13 taking over the medical and mental
14 health care, and the early retirement
15 incentives.

16 Currently there is difficulty in
17 replacing staff who have retired due to
18 the uncertainty of the Department of
19 Health in corrections. During this
20 period we were also told that our
21 medical director would be leaving at the
22 end of August. We attempted to rally
23 the unions to get advice and answers.
24 There has been little discussion and
25 clarity to this sudden bailout of the

1 Shelley

2 Department of Health from correctional
3 services. Why we would not attempt to
4 fix the few problems instead of throwing
5 away for the potential of documented
6 disasters? The following remarks are
7 issues of obscuring the clarity of the
8 situation:

9 Why are we not asking doctors from
10 the Syracuse area to enter into the
11 correctional health? There are doctors
12 at the jail and prison who have not been
13 formally asked to consider the
14 appointment of Medical Director, and
15 that if asked, stated they would
16 consider the position. We have already
17 spoken to such doctors and have received
18 answers to suggest that we will have an
19 active Medical Director if approached.
20 I would like to add that the residency
21 programs have worked well towards the
22 development and growth of the program as
23 well as facilitate the needs at the
24 correctional health facilities.

25 There are cost effective measures

Shelley

1 that can be outlined that would decrease
2 medication costs, hospital costs, over-
3 time costs and improvement of care.
4 Such measurements would include the
5 modification of policies, additions of
6 procedures, additional training,
7 changing and staffing patterns,
8 utilizing the skills and abilities of
9 the staff, additional protocols,
10 utilizing drug reps in the community,
11 and much more.

12 Why are we supporting the idea of
13 giving Onondaga County monies to a
14 company that would not profit from our
15 county? These private companies care
16 little about Syracuse and its people.
17 They have no interest in our public
18 health concerns. The private companies
19 deliver substandard care that has
20 exacerbated public health concerns in
21 the greater community. Their only
22 dedication is to the shareholders for
23 the company. Those monies will never
24 surface back into Onondaga County as

Shelley

1 they are not from this state. If you
2 were to cross-match many of the inmates
3 you will find they were also cared for
4 by the Department of Health. They are
5 our people. Their health would be
6 greater compromised if not taken care of
7 in the jail, costing taxpayers even more
8 money to treat even worse conditions.
9 How can you allow another corporation
10 For Profit to make money on our county
11 when we have the ability to do it
12 better?

13 Why do we not keep the control? Why
14 would we give control to outsiders while
15 bearing the liabilities? We need to
16 keep the control of the correctional
17 system within our own county. These are
18 our people. We should not give up
19 control of what happens to our people.
20 When inmates are released into the
21 community it is difficult to track, and
22 in the care, putting a huge burden back
23 on the Department of Health and the
24 community. Untreatable hypertension in
25

Shelley

1 the jail may lead to stroke out in the
2 community, thereby increasing medical
3 costs to the county and to its people.

4 Many lawsuits surround the
5 incompetence and unjust care of the
6 private companies. Federal courts
7 record shows CMC has been sued 40 times
8 in the past eight years. During the
9 past decade the family that now manages
10 medical care for Monroe County jail has
11 been entangled in lawsuits with claims
12 ranging from significant misappropriation
13 of company funds to unusual contentions
14 that marital infidelity led to a private
15 investigator bugging their house.

16 The Montgomery County District
17 Attorney investigated a contract
18 extension to CMC in which there were
19 accusations that a county official
20 received something in exchange for
21 recommending that the county continue
22 with CMC. Repeated failures, as
23 identified by investigators in New York
24 facilities, such as understaffed medical
25

Shelley

1 teams, nursing doing tests beyond their
2 training, prescription drugs withheld,
3 doctors out of reach, patient records
4 unread, employees misconduct unpunished,
5 doctors under-qualified.

6 The Commissioner of Corrections in
7 New York State condemned PHS for the
8 company's refusal to admit and address
9 deadly mistakes. 15 times in the past
10 four years the state has disciplined PHS
11 nurses and doctors. Doctors on-site
12 overruled by a supervising doctor in DC
13 by phone. Inmates have died in CMS run
14 prisons.

15 There have been more than 20 cases
16 in which inmates allegedly died as a
17 result of negligence, indifference,
18 understaffing, inadequate training or
19 overzealous cost cutting. Medical care
20 was so grossly inadequate that one
21 department of corrections fined CMS
22 nearly \$1 million. During an audit with
23 CMS, the records show that CMS failed to
24 provide medications to inmates during
25

Shelley

1 the required period 46 percent of the
2 time.

3 While it is true nine correctional
4 facilities have elected to give
5 privatizing a chance, the other 94
6 percent of the New York jails and
7 prisons are taking care of their own, as
8 it should be. There are approximately
9 135 facilities in New York State and
10 only nine have given the control up to
11 private sectors such as PHS, CMS and CMC.

12 If you look at Rikers Island for
13 example, PHS is giving substandard care
14 and is blamed for many deaths and
15 incidents. It is difficult to collect
16 on the lawsuits involving private
17 companies. They don't cooperate, they
18 are non-compliant and very evasive.
19 Paperwork is reported as unfortunately
20 not reaching its intended destination.
21 Who wants to deal with that?

22 The dental and optical services
23 worked well. Dental pulled out when
24 negotiations for a contract were not

Shelley

1 attainable per discussions. The dentist
2 was very willing to continue and stated
3 that he hoped it would work out. He
4 stated he enjoyed working at the
5 correctional facilities in Onondaga
6 County. He moved his whole family from
7 the state of Virginia to Onondaga County
8 where he planned a long career at
9 Onondaga Corrections.

10 The inmates are in custody and are
11 the property of the county. Onondaga
12 County is in fact liable and is subject
13 to lawsuits on defense. This is not
14 disputable. The bottom line is that all
15 parties involved will be sued once
16 determined any wrong doing. Our
17 credibility and financial stability will
18 once again be on the line. Under a
19 private company Onondaga County would
20 have no control to have done anything
21 different to have caused a better
22 outcome.

23 How can the county justify raising
24 property taxes almost a hundred percent
25

Shelley

1 while allowing the corporation to come
2 in and make a profit from a job that we
3 are able to do and have been doing, and
4 with guarantee, do it better? Property
5 taxes in suburbs are increasing to close
6 the huge budget deficit. It is said
7 that there needs to be cuts anywhere
8 possible. Why is this even up for
9 discussion without exhausting the
10 obvious alternatives first?

11 The psych doctors and staff are not
12 bailing out. They will be here to stay,
13 according to mental health staff and a
14 few doctors who have spoken up in dis-
15 belief that this is an actual possibility.
16 The mental health employees are very
17 dedicated to the inmate population.
18 There is a loyalty that runs very deep
19 as they are part of Onondaga County and
20 want to utilize every resource to help
21 its own people.

22 In conclusion, we respectfully
23 request Legislature to explore changes
24 within the confines of the county.
25

Shelley

1 Formally seek doctors in the community,
2 and allow our nursing director and
3 medical director to work out more
4 effective plans for operation, to
5 include cost effective measures in
6 health care. Please do not consider
7 privatizing. It would be a huge mistake
8 to allow a For Profit agency to insult
9 and violate this county and its good
10 people.

11 Onondaga County Correctional
12 facilities are accredited and uphold the
13 highest standards. We care about our
14 community, and the inmates are our
15 community. We acknowledge that there
16 are more challenges that face
17 correctional health as our community is
18 faced with unemployment and lack of
19 medical insurance, increased crimes,
20 poverty, depression and frustration to
21 say a few. The fact is that we are
22 professional and very caring individuals
23 and best suited to resolve the problems
24 of our own people.
25

1 Appleton

2 The Department of Health should
3 dictate and control the care plans. We
4 utilize the information and response to
5 treatments to plan for continuance out
6 in the community. Keeping people
7 informed and healthy in the community
8 alleviates the strains in the ER's,
9 clinics, doctors offices and schools.
10 The exacerbation of a disease process is
11 managed and controlled, and in many
12 cases avoided. In the end it is in the
13 best interest of Onondaga County
14 humanely and financially. Thank you.

15 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Jay Land.

16 **CHAIRMAN JORDAN:** Remind speakers to
17 limit your comments to three minutes.

18 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Next one is Jay
19 Land Syracuse Opera. You think he left?
20 Dave Appleton.

21 **DAVE APPLETON:** My name is David
22 Appleton. Ms. Mahoney recently is
23 accused of fiscal irresponsibility. I
24 would like you to be aware that for over
25 a year Ms. Mahoney and her top staff

1 Appleton

2 are unaware of at least six county
3 employees were in fact on the payroll.
4 I'm speaking of the zoning administra-
5 tion which was consolidated in the
6 1960s. When Ms. Mahoney took office, I
7 contacted her about a problem I was
8 having with them. And she was smiling,
9 Gordon Cuffy and others repeatedly
10 denied he had any employees on the
11 zoning administration.

12 I did not accept that. I was
13 pushing and pushing and I finally
14 supplied them with several names of
15 people who are on the zoning administra-
16 tion. Mr. Cuffy wrote back, put in
17 writing that these people were not
18 county employees. And I accepted that,
19 I never found out the truth. But I kept
20 pressuring them to check their facts.
21 And finally Mr. Cuffy wrote to me that
22 there were some county employees working
23 in the same physical office as zoning
24 administration personnel is how he put
25 it. That was not good enough. I did

1 Appleton

2 not accept that. I kept pressuring him
3 about these names.

4 And finally in writing admitted that
5 Heather Lamendola and five others were
6 county employees, while still
7 maintaining that they only work in the
8 same physical office makes it sound like
9 they're just sharing office space and
10 not running zoning administration.
11 Heather Lamendola is zoning administrator,
12 she's the head of the department. She's
13 on the payroll, she gets a county
14 paycheck I assume.

15 It took Ms. Mahoney and her staff a
16 year to admit that to me. And in doing
17 so Mr. Cuffy identifies her as Planner
18 3. She seems to think she's zoning
19 administrator and so does the Post
20 Standard and the rest of the media. The
21 answers I get from the county are that
22 she's a Planner 3 and she only works the
23 same office space as zoning administration
24 personnel. This is still not the whole
25 complete truth.

1 Appleton

2 I don't know how to describe that
3 except as being deceitful. I don't know
4 if they were originally unaware of these
5 employees or whether they just said they
6 were. Last June I asked Ms. Mahoney at
7 a public meeting and to explain this.
8 And her excuse was that these county
9 employees have an office in City Hall.
10 And this is what caused her and her
11 staff so much confusion. That they
12 could not find a name when supplied to
13 them on the county payroll, they
14 couldn't look it up and say yes, this
15 person works for me.

16 Consolidation seems to be the buzz
17 word these days. Ms. Mahoney is very
18 gung-ho on consolidation, taking over
19 services from local government and
20 presumably needing an increase in staff
21 and money to run these consolidated
22 services. When she can't know, she was
23 unaware of something that was
24 consolidated about six years ago. And I
25 accepted her first dozen or so denials.

1 Appleton

2 I would never learn the truth, and I
 3 don't know how long it took them to
 4 learn the truth or would have taken
 5 them.
 6 There is newspaper article in the
 7 Post Standard July 29th, she was denying
 8 publicly contributed to her campaign, an
 9 organization that contributed heavily to
 10 her campaign asked for help with the
 11 zoning administration. Then Mr. Cuffy
 12 and Ms. Mahoney stepped right up and
 13 ordered Heather Lamendola to stop
 14 enforcing the law that had been annulled
 15 by the state. Yet Mr. Cuffy in writing
 16 still insists that it's not zoning
 17 administration, it's not a county
 18 agency. They take orders from the
 19 county when it suits their purposes. I
 20 just think you should be aware they
 21 claim they couldn't find these employees
 22 in less than a year with my repeated
 23 urgings.
 24 One of these employees made a
 25 statement to a city employee that I was

1 Appleton

2 denied the request based on state law.
 3 I asked repeatedly in writing to be
 4 shown in the state law. I was ignored
 5 by this county employee. The County
 6 Executive claimed they didn't work for
 7 her for a year. Finally admitting that
 8 they work for them. I still have not
 9 received an answer. I think as
 10 Americans we should be able to see the
 11 laws that are being used against us. I
 12 don't think it exists. They will not
 13 admit it and they will not show me this
 14 law and ignored my requests. And the
 15 struggle I had to go through just to
 16 admit they had employees working in the
 17 same physical office space is incredible.
 18 If I'm redundant it's because it
 19 took me repeated, repeated arguments
 20 with them just to get this far. I still
 21 have not, I do not have the truth. The
 22 county employees are the entire staff of
 23 the zoning administration, they still
 24 will not admit that to me.
 25 VICE CHAIR CORBETT: Mr. Appleton,

1 Kalfass

2 maybe Mr. Rhinehart can take this and
 3 will continue.
 4 **AL KALFASS:** Good evening, my name
 5 is Al Kalfass, I'm a paramedic. Good
 6 evening. I would like to start by
 7 thanking all the EMS, fire, law
 8 enforcement personnel and their families
 9 for their continued dedication,
 10 sacrifices and services that they
 11 perform daily to keep my family,
 12 friends, neighbors and community safe.
 13 As a member of the Onondaga County
 14 public safety community you wake up not
 15 knowing what is going to happen
 16 throughout the day. What you do know is
 17 that the unthinkable and unexpected
 18 happen every day.
 19 It boils down to bad things happen
 20 to people from every part of our
 21 society. You don't think misfortune or
 22 tragedy will occur or how it will
 23 directly affect you or your family and
 24 if they will be okay when it happens. I
 25 am not only talking about the physical

1 Kalfass

2 factors that affect us as responders, I
 3 am also talking about the mental factors
 4 that are also part of the job. As an
 5 EMS provider I can only give examples of
 6 performing CPR on a newborn baby
 7 recently brought home by its parents and
 8 having them look at you hoping and
 9 praying that everything is going to be
 10 okay. It is even more difficult if you
 11 yourself have recently brought home your
 12 first child, you can only imagine what
 13 you would do if you were in their
 14 situation.
 15 This is no different when you're
 16 working on a fellow public servant who
 17 was doing their job protecting, helping
 18 and serving our community, a victim to
 19 these bad things that happen. It could
 20 be a police officer shot during a
 21 routine traffic stop that gets hit from
 22 behind or it could be a firefighter
 23 trapped in a burning building trying to
 24 save the person who did not get out in
 25 time or the EMS crew that's transporting

Kalfass

1
2 to a hospital a critically ill patient
3 when a car crashes into them.

4 I mention these incidents because
5 they already occurred to our local
6 public safety personnel and not to
7 complain about the job or the
8 responsibilities we accepted. We know
9 very well why we do them.

10 As a community we continue to face
11 hard economic times and we understand
12 that. We understand that we have the
13 responsibility to continue protecting
14 serving, saving and even preventing
15 incidents in Onondaga County as that is
16 our role as being public safety servants
17 or providers.

18 My question to the Legislators are
19 these: If it is our public safety
20 agencies duties and responsibilities to
21 protect our community, whether through
22 the fire service, law enforcement,
23 emergency medical services, what are
24 your responsibilities? Is it not your
25 responsibility to protect us by

Kalfass

1
2 providing the resources, manpower and
3 financial backing allowing us to do our
4 jobs as the legislators before you have?

5 What resource does Onondaga County
6 currently provide to all the public
7 safety agencies that solely support all
8 their missions? The answer is Air 1.
9 I'll explain in more detail shortly.

10 Third and the toughest question is
11 how much is a responder's life worth?
12 How much is the life of even one member
13 of our community, one resident or
14 visitor in this county worth? Based on
15 several different statements or news
16 articles your answers vary. And I must
17 note that some of you on the Legislature
18 have managed to accomplish putting a
19 price tag on the human life between the
20 price of \$500,000 to \$700,000 in this
21 upcoming year or if you plan on selling
22 it, at \$1.8 million. Based on my
23 research I found no judge, jury or other
24 governmental official that has been able
25 to accomplish that feat.

Kalfass

1
2 The article in this morning's Post
3 Standard carried remarks attributed to
4 some of the legislators, remarking only
5 7 out of 24 medical flights that Air 1
6 made were Onondaga County residents.
7 We're are here today in the county
8 convention center, built to attract
9 conferences and conventions that will
10 bring people from all over the country
11 to our county. Should they be warned
12 that the Onondaga County Legislature
13 does not believe they are entitled to
14 public safety services while they are
15 here? Will we carry this to the point
16 of not acknowledging crimes committed
17 against non-residents? Should the many
18 colleges we have here in the county
19 include this information in their
20 brochures? Will we have to check the
21 tax rolls and see if a property tax is
22 up to date on its taxes before we send
23 fire services to protect that property
24 or care for their residents?

25 Surely this would save countless tax

Kalfass

1
2 dollars. I can see from your reaction
3 that you think these remarks are
4 asinine. Perhaps, but no more asinine
5 than those already published in the
6 local newspaper about Air 1 or our
7 responders. Please understand that I'm
8 not talking about all the county
9 Legislators. The public safety
10 responders of this county know that
11 several of you are committed to doing
12 the right thing, which isn't necessarily
13 the easy thing to do, to help us
14 continue to protect the lives and
15 properties in this county, be they
16 residents or visitors.

17 There has been a strong focus over
18 the years to attack the Air 1 program.
19 Why don't we shift the same energy and
20 focus to ways to make the program work
21 even better and ways to reduce the cost
22 and burden to our taxpayers?

23 For those that have supported the
24 program or that are truly on the fence
25 about cost versus benefits of the Air 1

Kalfass

1 program, thank you for supporting us for
2 looking for accurate information. Over
3 the past several moments you have been
4 given statistics and financial figures
5 and talked about other agencies that can
6 provide services that Air 1 offers. I'm
7 requesting these numbers and data be
8 truly verified prior to your final
9 decision. I'm sure these are not all
10 accurate and therefore you do not have a
11 complete and accurate picture to make an
12 informed decision on the Air 1 program.

13 After all, how can you, with all the
14 other responsibilities you have?
15 Without that, you cannot fully comprehend
16 the affect that losing this program will
17 have on the public safety providers,
18 residents, businesses and visitors to
19 our county. I urge you to talk to your
20 local fire chiefs, police officers, EMTs,
21 paramedics, fire police and the other
22 providers who have utilized Air 1
23 directly and ask them why they needed it
24 and what the benefits this aircraft

Kalfass

1 offered or what life depended on it.
2 Over a month ago a video was given
3 to you about the Air 1 program. It was
4 made to help inform you and the public
5 about the Air 1 program and why it is
6 actually unique. The purpose of this
7 video was to hopefully open the door to
8 more discussions concerning Air 1 and
9 the cost versus benefit and to utilize
10 representatives of all the agencies
11 involved. This is not simply a line
12 item on the budget. This is a life item
13 in the public safety. It directly
14 affects the lives of our personnel and
15 families of all these we serve.
16 Our goal is to make sure you have
17 the facts, accurate information and
18 supportive data so you can make an
19 informed decision. We currently are
20 preparing a document that identifies
21 factors to be included and delineating
22 measurable success of the Air 1 program.
23 We understand that these are hard
24 economic times and hard decisions must
25

Kalfass

1 be made. These discussions should not
2 be made in haste or without benefit of
3 full and accurate information. Your
4 decision will directly affect the lives
5 and the safety of all our public safety
6 personnel, their families and those they
7 serve. All the public safety providers
8 dedicated their lives to protecting,
9 serving and saving lives in our commun-
10 ities, and we understand that we also
11 have a duty to be fiscally responsible
12 for providing these services.

13 Currently seeing increased
14 unemployment rates and an increase in
15 emergency calls for services. If you
16 watch your local news you've already
17 noticed the increase in shootings,
18 stabbings, armed robberies, hostage
19 situations, police pursuits, and
20 assaults. We are seeing major traffic
21 accidents as well as mass casualty
22 incidents, flooding, haz-mat calls as
23 well as several specialty rescues, not
24 to mention local hospitals going on
25

Kalfass

1 internal disaster due to overcrowding.
2 It is obviously not the time to reduce
3 our public safety services or staff,
4 period. Especially one as vital as Air
5 1. This program has the capability and
6 track record of supporting these multi-
7 disciplinary mission roles that benefits
8 all of Onondaga County emergency
9 services, not just the solitary
10 department that carries it in the
11 budget. However, this benefits all of
12 us.
13 We're asking you to create a special
14 line item for the county budget for the
15 Air 1 program and run it like a business.
16 I think one of the main points people
17 don't understand how the Air 1 program
18 currently works and who it involves.
19 The Onondaga County sheriff's office
20 primary function is one of law
21 enforcement. Charged with the
22 responsibility of providing safety of
23 the citizens of Onondaga County.
24 Responding to life and death situations
25

Kalfass

1 of those non-criminal nature, consistent
 2 with countywide emergency medical
 3 service protocol. They are responsible
 4 for the aircraft, maintenance and the
 5 OCSO of flight team members. University
 6 Hospital currently operates Air Medical
 7 Services Air 1 program, holds a
 8 Certificate of Need required by New York
 9 State Department of Health to operate
 10 the medical mission of Air 1. It
 11 supplies the team with all the necessary
 12 equipment, supplies, medication and
 13 medical direction. The trauma nurse/
 14 helicopter coordinator is responsible
 15 for those aspects and works closely with
 16 all team members as well as the
 17 University Trauma Team.

18 Upstate University medical is
 19 incorporated. The Upstate Emergency
 20 Medical Group Incorporated currently
 21 provides for funding for the day-to-day
 22 medical oversight of the program that
 23 includes the medical operations of the
 24 flight team. They are responsible for

Kalfass

1 making sure that all New York State
 2 Department of Health regulations and
 3 certifications are being completed and
 4 followed at all times.

5 The Western Area Volunteer Emergency
 6 Services is responsible for managing the
 7 day-to-day medical operations of the
 8 flight team to include daily equipment
 9 supply checks, quality assurance,
 10 personnel records, including the medical
 11 team certifications, scheduling,
 12 training, safety, orientation of new
 13 members, call reviews and documentation
 14 of patient care records and oversight of
 15 the medical team's personnel.

16 The flight team as we know it works
 17 together to support the mission of Air 1
 18 and has been doing so for over 25 years.
 19 In the event Air 1 is requested to
 20 respond to two different type incidents
 21 at the same time, the entire flight crew
 22 makes a decision based on the
 23 seriousness of each and all the factors
 24 known at the time.

Kalfass

1 Every year we come up here and
 2 defend this program. We understand that
 3 things are really hard financially.
 4 There has got to be a better way. You
 5 can't say the program is gone overnight
 6 based on numbers. \$1.8 million is
 7 already paid for. You've had several
 8 people come up here and talk to you
 9 about the financial. It's not a one
 10 time thing.

11 You want to talk about money, let's
 12 talk about the 3,500 volunteers out
 13 there that offer their services. What
 14 would the bill be for them? What would
 15 the bill be for us if they didn't
 16 volunteer? 3,500 volunteers of fire,
 17 EMS services. Do you want to add on
 18 Catholic Charities, Rescue Mission, Red
 19 Cross, hospital volunteers, veterans
 20 volunteers, what would we be paying
 21 then? I hope you take the time to
 22 reconsider this. It's a program that's
 23 definitely needed.

24 I got the numbers, real quickly

Kalfass

1 based on 911 calls, as all these
 2 agencies reporting to call in Onondaga
 3 County Sheriff's Air 1: 1,400 plus
 4 calls. New York State Police helicopter
 5 calls since 2007: 141 calls in the
 6 county. Mercy Flight Central last year:
 7 166 calls. That is not the county that
 8 is the air medical service region they
 9 cover.

10 Another concern I have is about
 11 Mercy Flight picking up the slack for
 12 the Air 1 team. How many times have
 13 they sued the county in the past five
 14 years to get this service? We finally
 15 win and you're going to give it to them?
 16 Thank you.

17 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** John Pappalau,
 18 Town of Geddes; Kathleen Rumpf; Bill
 19 Fisher, County Executive's office, and
 20 Roger Bull, New York State Nurses
 21 Association.

22 **JOHN PAPPALAU:** John Pappalau,
 23 Breakspear Road, Town of Geddes
 24 resident. Onondaga County has an

Pappalau

1
2 excellent fiscal reputation. Let's keep
3 it that way. I think that you must run
4 the county as you would run a business.
5 With the exception of police personnel,
6 with the exception of fire personnel and
7 emergency medical personnel I think
8 you've got to seriously consider
9 additional layoffs. Not only of
10 management people but also represented
11 and non-represented non-management
12 people.

13 Keep in mind people laid off, as I
14 understand it, now can collect
15 unemployment benefits up to 99 weeks.
16 That doesn't make anyone destitute in my
17 judgment. Now, if the economy doesn't
18 turn around, which would also benefit
19 Onondaga County, in 99 weeks we all
20 better pack up our bags and find
21 somewhere to go.

22 Keep the helicopter, do not purchase
23 any new police vehicles, highway
24 vehicles, Highway Department vehicles
25 that is, and equipment, even if you have

Rumpf

1
2 to hire a couple of additional mechanics
3 to keep these aging vehicles on the
4 road. You can very well still be ahead
5 in the game by doing that. Reduce the
6 amount of money that you plan or
7 propose, I'm not sure how it goes.
8 There is a reserve amount of cash that
9 the county has. Reduce the amount that
10 you take out of that fund. Thank you.
11 Less than 3 minutes. Have some courage,
12 enforce the 3 minute rule.

13 **KATHLEEN RUMPF:** Good evening and
14 thank you for this opportunity. I'm
15 here to ask you to not outsource health
16 care.

17 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Please give
18 your name.

19 **KATHLEEN RUMPF:** Kathleen Rumpf.
20 I'm here to ask you not to outsource
21 health care at the jail. It's not a
22 solution. It becomes more of a problem.
23 In a recent Public Safety Committee
24 meeting that I attended I heard Dr.
25 Morrow tell those of you who are on that

Rumpf

1
2 Committee that it was hard to find
3 doctors to work in the jail. That was
4 one reason for outsourcing. That is
5 simply not true.

6 We've had doctors in the jail and
7 we've had good nursing staff in the
8 jail. But we've also had doctors chased
9 out and nurses chased out for doing
10 their job. I think of Dr. Jesse
11 Williams, he was a fine, he is a fine
12 upstanding doctor. And he decided to
13 try to help out in the jail after the
14 Justice Department Civil Rights Division
15 was here. And he was set up. He was
16 set up and he left the jail. He was
17 accused of touching a female prisoner
18 inappropriately. Never happened. It's
19 not true.

20 If you want to save money our jail
21 is full off those who are there because
22 they have mental health issues, dual
23 diagnoses, marginalized, poor, those who
24 can't afford bail. And let me remind
25 you that most of those in the jail are

Rumpf

1
2 there charged with a crime, not convicted
3 most, and they can't afford to get out.
4 It's a waste of resources, a waste of
5 money and it's cruel.

6 And I don't know how many of you
7 have ever even been in the jail. Walk
8 in the doors, look at the faces of the
9 people who are there inside the jail. I
10 would suggest you go and see for yourself.

11 You may say you have no control over
12 those who end up in the jail. We as a
13 community are all responsible and it is
14 critical, and we need oversight in the
15 jail, it's imperative. If you empty the
16 jail of those who don't belong there and
17 place them in alternative to incarcera-
18 tion and other programs available that's
19 cheaper. It's also proven to be -- to
20 drop the recidivism rate too.

21 And how about the many who are sick
22 at the jail? I'm not saying that people
23 don't belong in the jail. Certainly
24 there are some that belong in the jail.
25 They shouldn't be abused, they shouldn't

1 Rumpf
 2 be mistreated, they should be taken care
 3 of. But if we emptied the jail of all
 4 those who didn't belong there, gee you
 5 might even be able to use some of that
 6 space for programs for the youth and
 7 other things that keep people out of
 8 jail.

9 Maybe you don't care about those in
 10 the jail. But we are responsible. I am
 11 responsible. You are responsible and
 12 the jail is such a closed environment.
 13 Very few of us know what goes on in the
 14 jail. Story after story in the
 15 newspapers written, death after death.
 16 And then silence until the next death.
 17 The next meeting, the next story of
 18 neglect. Take care of the people in the
 19 jail, take care of them or let them go.

20 I would like to tell you about a
 21 person who is in the jail recently. And
 22 she was quadriplegic, quadriplegic in
 23 the jail. She ended up between two and
 24 three months in the jail. She was
 25 arrested on a petit larceny shoplifting

1 Rumpf
 2 crime and she was put on probation, but
 3 she refused to wear an ankle monitor.
 4 And there was a reason for that.
 5 Because it's very important to,
 6 especially for quadriplegics to take
 7 care of skin. And anything tight and
 8 binding would be very detrimental to
 9 their health. She was there two or
 10 three months because of that. And this
 11 is not unusual. There are so many
 12 people who don't belong there.

13 I guess I'll close by saying to that
 14 many many have worked very hard, and
 15 there are many good people in the jail
 16 who work there who really care, nursing
 17 staff, mental health staff. The
 18 Onondaga County sheriff's deputies who
 19 work in the jail, they really care.
 20 There is always a few bad apples but
 21 there is very poor management at the
 22 jail. The sheriff is never there. It's
 23 something he doesn't really care about I
 24 guess. The oversight is rotten, jails
 25 and prisons all over the country, the

1 Fisher
 2 oversight is horrible. And you know, I
 3 could say there is no such thing as a
 4 good jail, but there are well run jails
 5 and that's what we need.

6 And in closing I would urge you to
 7 listen very closely to Barrie Gewanter
 8 from the ACLU, Syracuse, New York ACLU,
 9 because she has a very well prepared
 10 statement. Thank you.

11 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Mr. Fisher.
 12 **WILLIAM FISHER:** Thank you my name
 13 is William Fisher, I was born and raised
 14 here and in Onondaga County. I live in
 15 the great Town of Onondaga. As the
 16 Deputy County Executive my
 17 responsibilities include the exercise of
 18 general administrative responsibility on
 19 behalf of the County Executive over all
 20 financial administrative units of the
 21 county government. And in this capacity
 22 I would like to share the County
 23 Executive's major concerns with the
 24 amendments to the 2011 Tentative Annual
 25 Operating Budget as contained in the

1 Fisher
 2 Ways and Means report filed with the
 3 Clerk of the Legislature on September 30.

4 Her first major concern is what
 5 these changes will do to future County
 6 budgets beginning with the 2012 budget.
 7 County CFO Jim Rowley has initiated an
 8 effort to I think multi-year budgeting
 9 practices into the County's business
 10 process. Even if the County Legislature
 11 decides to adopt the County Executive's
 12 recommended 2011 budget without
 13 modifications -- what's the chance of
 14 that -- we will be facing a difficult
 15 but manageable budget next fall. We
 16 would be looking at, and this is based
 17 on the recommended budget, a budget gap
 18 between 10 and 20 million dollars in
 19 2012. If this Legislature adopts the
 20 Ways and Means amendments, the 2012 gap
 21 will increase by nearly \$40 million.

22 Her second major concern is what the
 23 amendments will do to the balance of our
 24 General Fund. The result of
 25 appropriating \$12 million in Fund

Fisher

1
 2 Balance and also committing the county
 3 to paying cash for the Early Retirement
 4 Incentive Program that is due in
 5 February 2012 will be a net reduction in
 6 Fund Balance of \$18.6 million. That is
 7 a huge number by any measure. And it's
 8 very easy to see how our Fund Balance
 9 could decline by more than \$20 million
 10 by the end of 2011 because all other
 11 reserves will be fully depleted by the
 12 Ways and Means amendments. And there
 13 are many cuts in the Ways and Means
 14 report that may not materialize or be
 15 sustainable over time.

16 If this Legislature can combine the
 17 recurring cuts that you have made to the
 18 County Executive's recommended budget
 19 with a reduced reliance on changes to
 20 appropriations or revenues that are not
 21 sustainable in the 2012 budget and the
 22 budgets beyond, then the taxpayers of
 23 Onondaga County will be well served.
 24 You will also be making a contribution
 25 to the discussion about how the various

Fisher/Bull

1 municipalities and the school districts
 2 in our county can look at their budget
 3 and ours as part of a single balance
 4 sheet.

5 As the County Executive has said on
 6 many occasions, we must look at the
 7 total property taxes paid by the
 8 citizens of our county when making
 9 decisions about our own budget. We have
 10 already seen how the decision to adopt a
 11 new ten year sales tax sharing agreement
 12 has led to significant improvements in
 13 the willingness to talk about
 14 consolidation and shared services among
 15 local governments. The budget you adopt
 16 next week will be equally influential
 17 one way or the other. Thank you.

18 **ROGER BULL:** Good evening my name is
 19 Roger Bull, New York State Nurses
 20 Association. I represent the nurses
 21 that are in the jail at this time,
 22 awaiting outsourcing. We don't believe
 23 the outsourcing is necessary. It will
 24 actually create more liability with the

Bull

1 private agencies that you hire.
 2 Rikers Island, Westchester County,
 3 if you investigate what happened in
 4 those areas you will see that they had
 5 an actual increase in liability.
 6 Correct internal management of personnel
 7 decreases your liability. This is
 8 what's lacking within this jail. Low
 9 salaries do not attract nurses. There
 10 is an extreme amount of nursing
 11 positions that are available to nurses
 12 right now. Why would they come to work
 13 in the jail for 5 or \$6 an hour less?

14 Management practices and personnel
 15 distribution should be assessed to
 16 provide effective and efficient medical
 17 care within the system. Currently
 18 management has weakened decision-making,
 19 they're ineffective in utilizing current
 20 policies and procedures and they are
 21 disengaged in the management of medical
 22 personnel, causing the exodus of staff.
 23 This in turn creates internal tension
 24 among the inmates which makes the

Bull/Fields

1 deputies in the jail's job more difficult.

2 I believe you have nearly the
 3 correct number of people within that
 4 facility but the management, the manage-
 5 ment of the policies and procedures and
 6 the distribution of job duties needs to
 7 be reassessed. Thank you.

8 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Mary Ann Fields
 9 from Upstate; Holly Sammons, county
 10 public library; Al LaFrance, Independent
 11 Fur Harvesters; and Tom Law, citizen.

12 **MARY ANN FIELDS:** Good evening, my
 13 name is Mary Ann Fields, I am a
 14 constituent of Cicero, born, raised and
 15 educated in Upstate, Onondaga County and
 16 Upstate New York. Also the trauma and
 17 helicopter program manager at University
 18 Hospital.

19 I'm here to talk about our sisters,
 20 brothers, mothers, fathers and our
 21 children that are injured every day in
 22 Onondaga County. Even when we're
 23 outside of Onondaga County when we're
 24 snowmobile, skiing or even on an

Fields

1
2 innocent day motorcycling across the
3 state, we could be injured and need air
4 medical care available to us. We at
5 University Hospital rely on rapid
6 transport for our trauma, stroke and
7 heart patients. The chance of survival
8 of trauma patients is directly related
9 to the time that they spend in the field
10 beforehand. Utilizing ground transport
11 for these critical patients doubles the
12 patient's time to a Level 1 trauma
13 center.

14 Air 1 provides a safe and rapid
15 transport within the county when other
16 public agencies are not available.
17 These patients need definitive care,
18 trauma surgeons, trauma nurses, the
19 operating room or the ICU. The chance
20 of survival decreases significantly
21 within that golden hour. This has been
22 proven in literature multiple times over
23 and over. These patients are brought
24 back to their families in Onondaga
25 County after and due to this joint

Fields

1
2 emergency care.
3 We confidently can project that air
4 medical services will have an increased
5 need. This is due to the severity, the
6 increase in severity of our loved ones
7 injuries that are already happening.
8 But also the introduction of strokes and
9 heart centers across Syracuse, not only
10 St. Joe's but University. This is also
11 brought on by literature, new guidelines
12 and the need for transport. This is not
13 only quality of life saved but precious
14 family life continues. With this
15 capability of Air 1 search and air
16 rescue with the medical and trauma
17 center working hand in hand. Thank you
18 for this opportunity.

19 **HOLLY SAMMONS:** Hi, thank you for
20 the opportunity to speak. My name is
21 Holly Sammons, and I am a CSEA
22 representative for the Library. I'm a
23 librarian in the Central Library and I'm
24 in charge of the local history and
25 genealogy department. I'm a life long

Sammons

1
2 resident of the city of Syracuse and I'm
3 a voter. I tell you I'm wearing all
4 these hats when I speak to you.
5 Before the early retirement
6 incentive began this year at the
7 library, which consist of the Central
8 Library and 8 branches we had a roster
9 of approximately 102 full time employees.
10 Six full time staff members that took
11 advantage of the early retirement. Now
12 as we go into the 2011 budget we're
13 looking at elimination of eight full
14 time positions. The library is looking
15 at a minimum of a 10 percent reduction
16 in our full time staff. This doesn't
17 include the 3 titles we lost last year.
18 In times of economic downturn it's a
19 well known fact that people turn more to
20 libraries for help. For help in job
21 seeking, for access to technology that
22 they cannot afford, for basic literacy
23 needs. I could go on for hours talking
24 about what people use libraries for. We
25 cannot continue to provide these

Sammons

1
2 services to the public with a 10 percent
3 slash our full time staff.
4 These past two years have not been
5 the beginning of our reduction in staff
6 and budget. In my twelve years at the
7 Central Library I've seen the demand for
8 library services from the residents of
9 Onondaga County increase, while the
10 staff is cut and our budgets are
11 diminished. We continue to do more with
12 less. We have never done less with less
13 and I don't see us continuing in the
14 future doing less with less.
15 As a union rep I have repeatedly
16 expressed safety concerns at the Central
17 Library where often a skeletal crew of
18 staff is asked to meet the demands of
19 the public. Safety is just one of the
20 many issues affected by this diminishing
21 staff. We have also seen promotional
22 positions eliminated, denying many long
23 term employees the opportunity for
24 advancement. We don't deny service to
25 the public. We welcome anyone and

1 Sammons/LaFrance

2 everyone to use our libraries. And yet
3 we think nothing of denying our staff
4 the right to work in a safe productive
5 work environment. An organization
6 cannot continue year after year and ask
7 more and more of their workers and
8 continue to take away while taking away
9 what they need.

10 I do not understand why putting
11 people out of work helps the economy of
12 Onondaga County. While we may not think
13 that libraries are essential like police
14 and firemen, libraries are the
15 cornerstone of our democracy. Libraries
16 speak to the quality of life in Onondaga
17 County. Without libraries what would
18 our community be like? I respectfully
19 urge that the Legislature to restore our
20 staffing levels to what we had at the
21 beginning of year. Ideally I would like
22 to go back 10 years to our staffing
23 levels. Thank you very much.

24 **AL LaFRANCE:** Hi, my name is Al
25 LaFrance and I'm here to speak on

1 LaFrance

2 Pratt's Falls Park. And I'm with the
3 sportsman groups the Independent Fur
4 Harvesters. We have leased a building
5 at Pratt's Falls for almost twenty
6 years. Twenty years ago we were asked
7 to take an active part in Pratt's Falls.
8 We developed a Carlie lot in the back.
9 We work with the Boy Scouts. We planted
10 trees, reforested it, we built trails,
11 we established a bird watching program,
12 put in bird houses, etc. etc.

13 We attended focus groups as to how
14 we can increase the usage of the park
15 and made suggestions, none of them were
16 followed. We kept asking for funding
17 and the funding was never followed.

18 The building burned at Pratt's Falls
19 maybe eight or ten years ago in the main
20 office. We were promised, with a focus
21 group, and we were promised that a new
22 building would be constructed with the
23 funds from the insurance. We never saw
24 a building. We have a little trailer
25 that set there ever since.

1 LaFrance

2 All the time while this was going on
3 we're hearing how Pratt's Falls is a
4 non-revenue producing park. We hear how
5 Pratt's Falls does not compare to
6 Onondaga Lake Park. Pratt's Falls is
7 not Onondaga Lake and never will be.
8 Onondaga Lake is hustle and bustle,
9 excitement, money, revenue. It's just
10 what this is about. Pratt's Falls is
11 not a revenue park. Pratt's Falls is
12 peace, it's tranquility, it's quiet.
13 And if you've never been there, I can
14 tell you you've never been there because
15 if you've ever been there you wouldn't
16 be cutting it.

17 Before you cut it you ought to take
18 a look at it. You ought to go for a
19 walk and understand what it is about.
20 Because it's not all about dollars and
21 cents. We've worked with the Boy Scouts
22 and the Girl Scouts, for the last 20
23 years.

24 I'm a 31 year sportsman education
25 instructor. We have had hundreds of

1 LaFrance

2 people go through sports and education
3 held at Pratt's Falls Park. We operate
4 out of an old lawnmower shed that we
5 refurbished ourselves, not with county
6 money, with our own money. And we lease
7 that building today from the county.

8 Most of the lands in the county
9 parks system were entrusted by those
10 that donated the land to our county
11 officials for the care and the
12 generations to come. These lands we're
13 entrusted to us to take care of so it
14 would be here for not only for this
15 generation but for the next generation.
16 To close these parks is violating that
17 trust that was put in to the county to
18 do this. These lands were given in most
19 cases. We do not need more unemployed
20 people.

21 When I first started with Pratt's
22 Falls Park some twenty years ago they
23 had a staff of about 15 people, mowing
24 grass, trimming trees, building trails;
25 it's down to 2. It went down from 15 to

LaFrance

1
2 10 to 8. Went to part time closure of
3 the park to try to save it. Then it
4 went down to two people trying to do it.
5 That's about all the cuts I think that
6 Pratt's Falls Park can take. It doesn't
7 need closure.

8 Pratt's Falls in addition to being a
9 park is also part of the heritage in the
10 Town of Pompey. It's the site of one of
11 the first saw mills in the entire
12 county. It's part of the heritage and
13 the history of the town as well as the
14 county. We've used it and called it as
15 a sportsman group, we called it home for
16 over twenty years. We've had promises
17 come and never be fulfilled.

18 I met with one of the superintendents
19 when the building burned a few years ago
20 tragically, and we went to Allegany
21 State Park. And we looked at the way
22 the wildlife is placed at Allegany State
23 Park. The superintendent from the
24 county went with me. We agreed, and our
25 club agreed to furnish taxidermy mounts,

LaFrance

1
2 wild life scenes, and to put our money
3 where our mouth was. We bought the
4 mounts, we don't have a building to put
5 them in. The building is gone and never
6 been replaced. I don't know where the
7 insurance money went when the park
8 building burned, when it went, but the
9 funding was never put back into Pratt's
10 Falls. It's been years since the
11 building burned.

12 Do not take this park. Don't close
13 this park. Because the people that
14 attend Pratt's Falls are not the people
15 that want to go and listen to the
16 jamborees and watch the speed boats
17 races and listen to the dogs barking and
18 the trams and the trolleys and the
19 bicycles, and they don't want to get run
20 over and bumped into, which is what
21 happens at Onondaga Lake.

22 The people that use this park want
23 to go and have a picnic on a Sunday
24 afternoon. They want to sit there with
25 the peace and the quiet. The ball field

LaFrance

1
2 was stripped, they took that out. They
3 used to have ice skating there. My
4 daughters and my son some 30 years ago
5 ice skated down the mill ponds at
6 Pratt's Falls Park. They tore the
7 shanty down, took the night lighting
8 down, then they say: Why doesn't
9 anybody use the park? They took the
10 ball field down. Why doesn't anybody
11 use the park? Nobody uses the park,
12 they've taken all the facilities. And
13 now they want to take the park itself.

14 I urge you do not take this park, do
15 not take it away. It's a very very
16 small portion of what your budget deficit
17 is. And taking it away is not going to
18 help. So I ask that you reinstate the
19 park and the funding for it. Let us
20 continue to use it to hold educational
21 classes for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and
22 the youth that come, so the area people
23 will have a place to go and enjoy it.

24 **TOM LAW:** Tom Law, thank you
25 Chairman Rhinehart, Legislators Buckle,

Law

1
2 Stanczyk. I think I might have heard
3 enough but maybe there is a little left
4 of one side of my brain here to get
5 going. I think we're getting near the
6 end. But Tom Law from Eastwood, that's
7 me and my dad moved here since '54, been
8 around quite a while. Gone through the
9 schools here, family spent on education
10 quite a bit. Mom, from the schools
11 Central Square, she taught there for 34
12 years, 33 years. I have sisters in
13 Baldwinsville teaching and Sandy my
14 sister taught at Franklin for 25 years
15 and then Solace for 11 years and
16 retired. So I have a little background.

17 My mother was at Project Advance for
18 25 years and high school advance
19 placement credits. My dad sold
20 insurance here for 33 years, mostly with
21 Connecticut Mutual Life Health
22 Insurance. My brother's new general
23 agent for four years with Massachusetts
24 Mutual, about a hundred people on staff
25 in different satellite communities and

Law

1
2 in Syracuse after about 27 years
3 following my father in the insurance
4 business. So we have a little bit here
5 in Syracuse and I helped build this
6 building.

7 I was with Romesh Modie, doing
8 construction surveys and lay out. We
9 surveyed these blocks. We located the
10 concrete for the construction layout. I
11 sited the parking lot myself that went
12 on the block, and the site for this one
13 in this block. If you look up at the
14 recessed lighting it came to me in
15 February 1991, craftsman said, how are
16 we going to layout that curve? Had
17 trouble with it. So I made a template
18 so that they could lay out that curve in
19 these 6 bays up here where the recessed
20 lighting is. So need some credit, got
21 it done.

22 As far as the budget \$1,189,600. I
23 think that's something like this year's
24 budget. Working with numbers, vary, get
25 numbers in your head a little bit. So I

Law

1 think that we attracted a little
2 attention here tonight. Could have been
3 a lot more people. I salute you people
4 from OnGov, our Legislators and also I
5 thank Mr. Antonochi, Rowley, other
6 people, budget people that put this
7 together, the auditors and budgeters.

8 My count it's about 935 pages of the
9 budget in the capital improvement. If
10 you add in the cap, cap which is the
11 auditors report here, they put it out
12 December 29th, financial report from the
13 auditor. It's a lot to go through. But
14 you folks deal with a lot. I'm just
15 going to throw this in at you, just a
16 sense of appreciation what you have to
17 deal with.

18 Fiscal year budget for the county
19 fiscal year January 1st to December 31st
20 for the county. For New York, April 1st
21 starts. For Syracuse July 1st it starts.
22 Federal fiscal year starts October 1st.
23 That may sound like a lot of chaos,
24 maybe they do actually work together.
25

Law

1 That's only some of the stuff.

2 Another few numbers, talking a few
3 numbers on that bill, whatever. 4,250
4 jobs in the county that's counted in
5 mostly in the employees representation
6 Appendix 7. So it's something like that
7 I guess, 4,250. I'm not sure of all of
8 those. Then about 2,750 or so I think
9 pensioners that get paychecks. And some
10 of the meetings I've heard I think that
11 they cut like 400,000 checks a year in
12 the county; I might be off there. But
13 you've got that many on payroll, 26
14 payrolls a year whatever times 4,000,
15 and all purchasing, so there is a lot of
16 checks to go through.

17 So how am I going to help tonight?
18 Well I'd say this, just a couple of
19 general things, kind of in closing but,
20 these numbers, a lot of these lines can
21 be automatic. I mean the budget, it's
22 like, you know, let's go to the
23 Probation Department, let's go to the
24 Sheriff's Department, let's go to the

Law

1 Library. The lines are there year to
2 year. But a couple things about that,
3 they aren't really completely automatic
4 because you vote on them. And someone
5 has to say, where the human part of this
6 is, yeah that's a good budget or let's
7 look at this and bear down on the pencil
8 and make it a good budget. Or let's say
9 that this price is okay if you're in
10 purchasing. Yeah, that's the price
11 we're going to take. That's the human
12 side of it, you set the acceptable
13 prices. And the numbers just don't
14 flow, someone has to say, well where is
15 the boundary of the numbers? I mean
16 that's the difficulty of hearing each
17 other in the Legislature.

18 I mean saying where, you know, who
19 gets to say and when the argument stops
20 and when someone has to say. And it can
21 be difficult. And especially with these
22 tax increases. I mean I heard about
23 these tax increases percentages for some
24 of these towns. And I saw where the
25

Law

1
2 villages were supposedly not going to
3 get any money or something, you know, a
4 few years down the road. What the heck
5 is going on here, you know? County
6 budget. And that's, you know, so you
7 know more about that stuff than I do.

8 But one thing I threw at the table
9 here tonight is it's kind of back, you
10 know, sitting home I said gee, I looked
11 at some of this, you know, but what, you
12 know, backing up a little bit two things
13 in closing. Backing up a little bit the
14 thing I wrote was, can't we write up a
15 table of 7 peers, in other words
16 counties around the world. You know,
17 maybe us and two other counties from the
18 US, and one from Africa, one from Japan,
19 one from India, maybe even leave Europe
20 out. But I don't know if that's
21 sacrilegious. But I'm saying to back up
22 a little bit because you know, 937 pages
23 or whatever it is, and you're bearing
24 down on it. You know month after month
25 in the committees, you know, there is a

Law

1
2 little breathing space in here maybe to
3 comparatively look at what's going on in
4 other situations and what's senior
5 management thinking of how other
6 counties and what line items aren't
7 there and what's happening with health
8 insurance, risk managers in other
9 counties. And are numbers right
10 comparatively? And how we compare with
11 Greensboro, North Carolina, the county
12 there, a low tax state. And attracting
13 retirees, you know, how are we doing?

14 So that was my idea you know, to
15 have a comparative chart like businesses
16 do and so forth. The only useful number
17 that I came up with, like a little
18 creative number, number crunching was
19 this. And I took and I came up with a
20 ratio that I thought, you know, speaks a
21 little bit to the situation of
22 government being in our lives. And Norm
23 Polis wrote a column about three years
24 ago in the Business Journal: If you add
25 all the taxes together that the outtake

Law

1
2 of taxes amounts to like 37 percent; the
3 feds, the local, county and sales. And
4 we're headed in the federal situation
5 where, you know, it's really looking
6 troubling in terms of the cracks in the
7 dike.

8 And so working with the numbers,
9 this little ratio speaking a little
10 humanly about this, if you take the
11 county budget 1.2 billion, you add the
12 city budget together, that's about 700
13 million, you come close to 2 billion.
14 If you divide that by the number of
15 hours worked in the county, if there is
16 220,000 workers times 2,000 hours each
17 in the year. So on the top you've got
18 the amount of, you've got local
19 government money spent coming up, and on
20 the bottom you've got the number of
21 hours worked. You come up with hours or
22 dollars of government expenses for hours
23 worked in the county. And I figured
24 that out it's going to be roughly about
25 \$4.00. \$4 per hour for every working

Venesky

1
2 hour done in the county is local
3 government money. Now that's just real
4 ball park, I'm not saying recycle.

5 **CHAIRMAN RHINEHART:** Can I interrupt
6 you for a second. We have a few more
7 people to go, I was going to suggest
8 maybe if I give you my card we could get
9 together you and I and Mr. Buckle. And
10 I think you've got a couple good ideas
11 there that maybe we could hammer those
12 out if you wouldn't mind.

13 **TOM LAW:** Thank you.

14 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Mark Venesky;
15 Bill Sieling, Barrie Gewanter from New
16 York Civil Liberties and Frieda Weeks,
17 Salt City Performing Arts.

18 **MARK VENESKY:** Good evening ladies
19 and gentlemen, thank you for hearing me.
20 My name is Mark Venesky. V-E-N-E-S-K-Y,
21 I'm a life long resident of Onondaga
22 County, I'm a taxpayer. I never
23 collected a nickel from any sort of
24 public payroll. I've worked for a
25 private company, only two in my tenure

Venesky

1 here in Central New York. One was a
2 stock boy when I was in college, in high
3 school, and then I joined I think a
4 great company UPS and very fortunate to
5 spend 35 years with them as of last
6 Sunday.

7 I've listened to a lot of folks here
8 tonight and I'm not a public employee,
9 and I've listened to a lot of public
10 employee heads. All say that, you know,
11 save my program, save my program, don't
12 cut my money. Well, the reality of it
13 is we're in trouble, financially we're
14 in trouble. I have two children, one is
15 an engineer here for SRC Tech trying to
16 raise a family, I have another one in
17 Nevada who will never come back, will
18 end up teaching there.

19 I, for my company for the last 17
20 years, I call on small businesses, and I
21 talk to business owners. And I also
22 talk to the employees of those
23 businesses. And the life out there in
24 the private side is not what the life is

Venesky

1 on the public side. Two accounts I left
2 today have their employees working four
3 days a week and they collect
4 unemployment on the fifth. I've had
5 business owners tell me they have not
6 taken a raise in the last two years. My
7 company, for its management people, we
8 did not take a raise. My 401(k), I
9 contribute to my pension. I also pay
10 for my health care. We have suspended
11 our 401(k) payments or the company
12 match. So there is pain out there.

13 I don't hear anybody talking about
14 sharing the pain here. I think we spend
15 too much money. I'm very concerned
16 about my property taxes. You're taxing
17 me out, the user taxes, the sales taxes.
18 And I understand the state of New York,
19 there is unfunded mandates that come
20 down and you guys have a tough job. You
21 can't control the unfunded mandates.
22 I'll try to control that with the rest
23 of you in November at the voting booth.

24 But I'm concerned about no one

Venesky

1 wanted to make any cuts, no one wanted
2 to share any sacrifice. Union people
3 God bless you we're a union company, but
4 union people saying no we're not going
5 to take any cuts. Well, let me put it
6 to you this way. I pay taxes to the
7 county, those taxes pay the salary of
8 county employees. We, and there are a
9 few of us every year if you take a look
10 at the population numbers in Central New
11 York who pay taxes, pay the original
12 taxes that pay everybody else's salary
13 are taking a beating.

14 While the police chief has 29 people
15 he has not replaced, I would guess
16 probably could eliminate another 29. I
17 heard different numbers of the amount of
18 county employees. I'm not saying I want
19 anybody to lose their jobs, but jobs,
20 creation of wealth comes from the
21 private end not from the public end
22 taking from the people who are earning.
23 I've heard numbers of 3,200 employees in
24 the County of Onondaga. Now I'm hearing

Venesky

1 4,500. I don't know how many employees
2 we have. I would ask you to take a look
3 and say do we need those employees, do
4 we need them all?

5 Police forces, I think we have too
6 many, to be honest with you. Where I
7 live in Cicero, New York, within 10
8 miles of my home I have the state
9 police, the sheriff's department, North
10 Syracuse police department, Cicero
11 police department. If there is a call
12 we're like bumper cars out there. So I
13 question as to how many we need.

14 We talk about having to replace
15 vehicles and sheriff's cars or county
16 cars having a hundred thousand miles.
17 My personal car has 158,000. I maintain
18 it, I don't abuse it. When I'm not in
19 it I shut it off, and that's a cost
20 savings.

21 So I guess I would ask you to do a
22 couple things. I'm asking you to
23 represent me. I'm asking you to cut
24 even more money. I don't want to pay

Venesky

1
2 anymore in taxes, I have other
3 obligations, I earn the money, I want to
4 spend the money the way I earn it. I
5 would take a look at that.

6 And the other concern I have is
7 consolidation. I don't understand why,
8 and trust me I'm sure that many if not
9 all the people here are much smarter
10 than I am, but I don't understand why we
11 need so many jurisdictions, so many
12 police departments, so many school
13 districts, no central purchasing, I'm
14 confused by that.

15 Another thing too is I'm concerned
16 about the contracts. I look at it and I
17 say to myself, well we have an officer
18 going to be convicted of selling or was
19 convicted, an ex-police officer of
20 selling marijuana to children and all
21 sorts of stuff. His pension is \$49,000
22 a year. So let's take a look at the
23 cost of what it costs to actually run
24 Onondaga County. I need a break. I'm
speaking for a lot of people who feel

Sieling

1 the way I do.

2 We need less spending and even
3 deeper cuts. If you want me to stay in
4 my retirement, if you want my children
5 to stay here and I only have one left.
6 And I talked to business owners who try
7 to employ people and take care of it and
8 raise a family in this county, they're
9 telling me, Mark I don't know how much
10 longer I can stay.

11 So I'm asking you to take a real
12 good look at the number of employees,
13 how we negotiate our contracts with
14 employees and the benefits that we are,
15 the rest of us are held accountable to
16 in the future. And thank you very much,
17 appreciate it.

18 **BILL SIELING:** Hi, my name is Bill
19 Sieling, I live in Pompey. My wife and
20 I have lived here since we were married
21 26 years ago. I am extremely thankful
22 for the young woman who got up earlier
23 and spoke about what music means to
24 human beings. In a lot of ways I
25

Sieling

1 married her 26 years ago. So we've
2 chosen Syracuse as a place to live, not
3 because of the snow, not because of
4 anything to do with who's providing
5 health care in the jail or Air 1
6 although those are great things. We're
7 scared when we see the list of things
8 getting cut and they are literally the
9 reason why we live in Central New York.

10 We live in Central New York because
11 there is Symphony here that middle class
12 people can afford to go to on a regular
13 basis. There is a Symphony here, there
14 is an Opera company here that middle
15 class people can afford to go to. There
16 are theater programs, there are other
17 musical opportunities. We have three
18 kids. I go down the list we participated
19 in, everything you've got here in item
20 one of your cuts.

21 So there are other places to live.
22 I don't want her to move on, I really
23 don't. I want you to stay here.

24 **STEPHANIE NADEAU:** I want to.
25

Sieling/Gewanter

1 **BILL SIELING:** I want to stay here,
2 and I don't mean that in any way like
3 you're not taking your job seriously,
4 but I do want to echo one thing. And
5 the gentleman who spoke just before me
6 talked about some business things. I
7 run my own business. The very very easy
8 and best way to improve the bottom line
9 is to improve the top line. And to
10 improve the top line you keep taxpayers
11 in this county. To keep taxpayers in
12 this county you provide the quality of
13 life that people want to have to live
14 here. I think that's about it, thank you.

15 **BARRIE GEWANTER:** My name is Barrie
16 Gewanter and I represent the New York
17 Civil Liberties Union. I have this
18 statement and also the letter that I
19 e-mailed to many of you in hard copy
20 today. Ms. Maturo, I ask this be
21 distributed to the legislators in hard
22 copy.

23 I represent the New York Civil
24 Liberties Union, which is the New York
25

Gewanter

1
2 affiliate of the ACLU. I am also a
3 member of the new Cross Cultural
4 Coalition for Civil Rights, known as
5 United As One. I come before you today
6 to speak about the management of the
7 Justice Center jail and the proposal to
8 privatize the medical and mental health
9 care provided to inmates in the Justice
10 Center, Jamesville and Hillbrook. I
11 received many calls and letters from
12 inmates in the Justice Center and from
13 their families. From time to time I
14 also hear from people who work in the
15 jail.

16 In the past two to three years the
17 number and the seriousness of these jail
18 related concerns has increased. These
19 concerns include experiences of
20 dismissive and demeaning treatment by
21 guards and medical staff, unnecessary
22 and excessive use of force, selective
23 use of restrictions and punishments,
24 blatant use of racial and homophobic
25 epithets by guards. A culture seems to

Gewanter

1
2 have been allowed to fester in the jail
3 so that such clearly inappropriate
4 conduct is tolerated or simply ignored.
5 There seems to be little or no
6 accountability for such misconduct.
7 This needs to change.

8 There are deputies and medical staff
9 who work in this very challenging
10 environment yet still maintain their
11 professionalism, composure and compassion
12 who try to ensure the well-being of each
13 incarcerated person and follow the
14 procedures and policies designed to keep
15 everybody safe. I want to recognize and
16 praise these many individuals.

17 But at the same time I need to call
18 for better management of this facility
19 so that each inmate is treated fairly
20 and humanely. No one should suffer
21 pain, injury or death in this jail
22 because a deputy or a group of deputies
23 decided to bypass procedure as seems to
24 have been the case of Raul Pinet. And
25 it must be made crystal clear at every

Gewanter

1
2 level from captain and lieutenant to
3 sergeant and deputy, that racism,
4 homophobia unnecessary and excessive use
5 of force and other demeaning treatment
6 will not be tolerated in any location in
7 the jail.

8 I've been most disturbed however by
9 the complaints I have received related
10 to the medical care. A few examples
11 include inmates denied essential
12 prescribed medications. Unconscionable
13 delays in emergency medical response and
14 medical attention for truly acute
15 injuries. Inmates with severe mobility
16 impairments denied the use of assistive
17 devices such as a wheelchair. Failure
18 to provide even the minimal standard of
19 care for severely disabled inmates. And
20 in one case failure to properly address
21 a wound that involved a drug resistant
22 and infectious bacteria.

23 We're all aware of the tragic and
24 preventable death of Chuniece
25 Patterson as the result of ectopic

Gewanter

1
2 pregnancy. The Commissions on
3 Corrections found that had Chuniece
4 received adequate responsible, competent
5 medical care her death would have been
6 prevented.

7 The answer here again is better
8 management within the facility. And
9 while the Commissioner of Health seems
10 ready and willing to simply walk away
11 from her oversight and management role
12 in correctional health, the real
13 solution is to take a hard look at what
14 needs fixing rather than to just turn
15 away.

16 There is a qualified and committed
17 professional who became the Director of
18 Nursing only a couple of months ago. A
19 Public Health Nurse who seems to have
20 the drive and the will to fix the
21 problems, and contrary to previous
22 examples she has an open door. Yet
23 instead of giving her the support and
24 the authority to fix the problem the
25 County is moving to eliminate 60 county

Gewanter

1
2 nursing mental health and medical
3 support jobs and then hand over the
4 responsibility to a For Profit company,
5 a company with no ties to Onondaga
6 County, that will end up making a profit
7 from Onondaga County as a result of its
8 profit driven decisions about the medical
9 care of Onondaga county residents.

10 Legislators, you acknowledge that
11 this will not produce any cost savings
12 to the county. And even Mr. Cuffy
13 acknowledges that the county will not
14 evade its liability for lawsuits, for
15 injuries and deaths related to
16 deficiencies in care. And the records
17 of these few companies that provide
18 these services in other areas raise very
19 serious concerns about the quality of
20 care they provide. A few easy Google
21 searches reveal that several of these
22 companies have had problems with
23 inadequate staffing, as well as nursing
24 and doctors doing work they're not
25 qualified to do. They delay, deny

Gewanter

1
2 prescription medications. They do not
3 keep accurate and complete medical
4 records. They refuse to give medical
5 records to county and state officials so
6 they can adequately monitor contracts.
7 And they ignore or dismiss acute medical
8 needs. And lawsuits are the results.
9 Lawsuits that would end up naming this
10 county.

11 See, it doesn't matter if the
12 company specializes in correctional
13 health if they do it badly. I'd much
14 rather you work with people from
15 Onondaga County to fix the problems we
16 face in caring for the people detained
17 in Onondaga County. If we need to
18 contract a new doctor to oversee the
19 care, fine, but don't throw the baby out
20 with the bath water. If anyone bothered
21 to ask the doctors who are working in
22 the jail right now, you might find that
23 one or more of them might be interested
24 in serving as the facilities medical
25 director. But I've been told they were

Gewanter

1
2 never asked.

3 The budget being forwarded by the
4 Ways and Means Committee anticipates the
5 proposed transition to privatized care
6 midway through the next calendar year.
7 If that is what does happen, then I
8 strongly request that you ensure the
9 following as laid out in the letter that
10 I sent out late last night, from my
11 organization, NAACP, Disabled in Action
12 and the League of United Latin American
13 Citizens known as ULAC.

14 Number 1. Conduct a searching and
15 thorough assessment of the quality of
16 care being provided under the current
17 system. We need to have a baseline for
18 comparison after a new system is
19 established and this must include an
20 honest assessment of the current
21 problems.

22 Right now I'm told county
23 administrators in negotiating a
24 contract, and this is Number 2, a
25 contract with a vendor they have

Gewanter

1
2 selected. But there's been no
3 transparency in this process. Not for
4 the public or from most Legislators. It
5 is crucial that the county identify and
6 explain its choice. And provide
7 opportunities for the public to seek
8 information and gain some degree of
9 confidence in the transition. This
10 cannot occur behind closed doors. The
11 county must make public its initial
12 draft of the contract for the selected
13 vendor and solicit input from
14 Legislators and the public before the
15 contract is finalized.

16 3. County administrators intend to
17 retain only one Department of Health
18 employee to oversee the contractual
19 obligations to provide medical and
20 mental health care to an average daily
21 population of over 1,000 detainees in
22 three facilities. Are you kidding?
23 This would be an impossible task for one
24 person. The contract monitor function
25 truly requires a multi-disciplinary team

Gewanter

1
2 of experienced professionals to ensure
3 the contractor is fully meeting its
4 obligation to the detainees and to the
5 county.
6 4th and last. The RFP expressly
7 states that the contract manager will
8 have the right to work with other
9 individuals and organizations. This
10 sets a framework for establishing and
11 institutionalizing a new and independent
12 oversight body composed of organization-
13 al community representatives. Perhaps
14 not only in relation to the medical and
15 mental health care but also to inform
16 and improve the management of the county
17 detention facilities, especially the
18 Justice Center.

19 It's not enough that an organization
20 is allowed to enter the jail to listen
21 to inmates concerns. We need the county
22 to institutionalize a feedback mechanism
23 that will actually inform and motivate
24 change. Thank you.

FRIEDA WEEKS: Hi, my name is Frieda

Weeks

1
2 Weeks, I'm a resident of Liverpool. I
3 work during the day as a cosmetic
4 executive for Macy's. In my spare time
5 I'm in a not For Profit cancer research
6 in memory of my daughter. I heard a lot
7 of conversation about the arts tonight
8 and what the impacts will be on the
9 economy if you cut the budget for the
10 arts.

11 I'm here to tell you what the impact
12 will be on the hearts of the families.
13 In 1993, my husband, a musician, came
14 home with two tickets to my least
15 favorite show, Jesus Christ Superstar.
16 The next year he went down with our
17 daughter, aged 8 in tow and our son age
18 6 in tow, and they auditioned for the
19 show, and they all got in. I didn't
20 realize that everybody got in.

21 But I found out, we found much more
22 than a show, we found a home. My
23 husband found a place in the pit as a
24 musician, my daughter found a place to
25 sing and dance, be an actress on the

Weeks

1
2 stage. My son who has high functioning
3 autism and perfect pitch suffering from
4 a toxicity at school, found a home where
5 everyone loved and accepted him for his
6 talents and what he brought to the
7 stage. Other actors loved him because
8 he always remembered everyone else's
9 line and could say them if anybody else
10 forgot and could correct them.

11 Joe and Pat Lotito I watched them
12 over the years as we stayed, and grew
13 with other families there. The families
14 at the theatre became our extended
15 families. I watched them take in
16 wayward teenagers from the streets who
17 had no place to go to who most likely
18 would have been in jail. But Joe Lotito
19 found a place for them. My daughter age
20 13, opened a season as Helen Keller
21 broke theater records for her
22 performance. She was able, before she
23 died in 2008 of cancer to live a full
24 life achieving dreams that few people
25 ever did. Auditioning and being called

Weeks

1
2 back for Broadway shows and movies and
3 an international dance troupe with
4 Sesame Street live. Our son, age 23,
5 has a degree in music and a masters
6 certificate from Berkley School of Music
7 which he never would have achieved
8 without the encouragement of Joe and Pat
9 Lotito.

10 For 40 years Salt City Center has
11 encouraged everyone to grow in the arts.
12 I dare you to find an actor in this town
13 who did not start their career in Jesus
14 Christ Superstar. I dare you to find a
15 local community theatre that did not
16 start because someone started in Jesus
17 Christ Superstar. The legacy that Joe
18 and Pat have created is viable, it's
19 important for the community, it's
20 important to the hearts of our young.
21 It is an important theatre, we cannot
22 cut the arts. You are cutting the
23 hearts of families.

24 My kids grew up spending summers in
25 the Theatre for the Arts Program at Salt

Weeks

1
2 City. As Mr. Sieling said, we
3 participated in the symphony, the opera,
4 Red House, talent companies. I can't
5 name the theatre companies and the arts
6 that we've supported because of that one
7 audition in 1994 that ended up changing
8 our families life forever. We were the
9 ones coming home at midnight with our
10 kids from rehearsal, and yes, they had
11 to go to school the next day. But we
12 were a family of four who found an
13 activity that we all did together. And
14 which found other families who did those
15 activities too that remain as extended
16 family to us and some who are on the
17 board of our foundation in memory of our
18 daughter.

19 So I'm asking you when you think
20 about the arts and money, think about
21 the heart of this community and what it
22 does for the people. Thank you.

23 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** I have four
24 more. Maurice Yotson, Kurt Schmeling
and Rodney Sanford. I see Kurt is here.

Schmeling

1
2 Maurice Yotson? And Rodney Sanford.
3 Then behind them then is Carol
4 Christiansen and David Barbosa.
5 Mr. Schmeling?

6 **KURT SCHMELING:** That was my dad,
7 I'm Kurt. I notice this one flavor here
8 would rather I wasn't here, but that
9 seems to be the same problem we have
10 with the city of Syracuse with them.
11 Because we had six percent increase in
12 property taxes there because the mayor
13 didn't want to eliminate the \$6 million
14 out of the \$13 million of overtime in
15 the city budget. So we got a 6 percent
16 tax increase in the city of Syracuse. I
17 really wouldn't want to see that happen
18 with the people on the Legislature here
19 as it did in the city.

20 Now some of these people that feel
21 that way have never heard Chris Collins
22 talk, who is the executive for the Erie
23 County. And one of things that he uses,
24 and he's a very tough executive, he says
25 Number 1, do we need it? Number 2, can

Schmeling

1
2 we afford it? And Number 3, will it
3 make our citizens lives better? I think
4 we need to apply that to what we do when
5 we look at our budget here.

6 I started work at Carrier in 1960,
7 we had 7,200 people there. We now have
8 about 1,100 there. The taxes are big
9 enough that they'll knock down the
10 buildings before they'll pay the taxes.
11 So we really have got to stop and look
12 at how we spend our money. There was
13 one group here, I noticed that most of
14 the people here are the people that are
15 going to be receiving the public money.
16 One group that wasn't here present night
17 to be considered is the people that are
18 paying the public money. And part of
19 that group are senior citizens.

20 Senior citizens have not seen an
21 increase in their Social Security in two
22 years because according to the federal
23 government we have no inflation. Now
24 somewhere along the line somebody is not
25 telling the truth. Because the cost

Christiansen

1
2 keeps going up for us and there is no
3 increase in the Social Security. So you
4 have a very difficult road to walk here
5 but I really think that that group
6 should be thought about before you make
7 a final decision. Thank you.

8 **CAROL CHRISTIANSEN:** I'm Carol
9 Christiansen, I live in Liverpool and
10 I'd like to say that I wear many hats.
11 I am a nurse at University Hospital, I'm
12 also an EMT, I'm a citizen of Onondaga
13 County, an active member of the commun-
14 ity, a mom, a wife and a grandmother.

15 When it comes to health care it's
16 saving lives, there should be no budget
17 cuts period. We should be finding ways
18 to reduce unnecessary and overspending
19 and to help make the ends meet.

20 That being said, I'm not here to
21 talk specifically about either of those
22 issues. I'm here to speak about arts
23 and culture in Central New York. At the
24 age of 16 I began life in theatre at
25 Salt City Center for the Performing Arts,

1 Christiansen

2 along with my father and my brother. We
3 also began in Jesus Christ Superstar.
4 It was a passion for my then brother
5 nine years old and my father who had,
6 both had wonderful voices. It wasn't
7 until about twenty years ago when I
8 introduced theatre to my own four
9 children that it became a passion for
10 me. It also became a second home and an
11 extended family. I became a costumer
12 and production stages manager for many
13 productions with several different
14 companies throughout Central New York.
15 But mostly I stayed with Salt City Center.

16 My four children became actors and
17 film operator and stagehands. They
18 loved the work, the challenge and the
19 reward of a show well done. But I think
20 they appreciate mostly they felt at home
21 there, they felt accepted, appreciated
22 and they were learning skills that they
23 could use for life long and maybe in a
24 career later on. Like my brother did,
25 who is now field engineer at CNN with

1 Christiansen

2 absolutely no degree, all because he
3 worked in theatre and radio and TV here.

4 Now my four year old grandson also
5 had his first experience once again with
6 Jesus Christ Superstar because everybody
7 is accepted the past year, and he can't
8 wait to go on stage again. I'm sure
9 many of you have seen a live show on
10 stage, whether it be on Broadway or
11 local community. And Joe and Pat Lotito
12 at Salt City Center were instrumental in
13 achieving local theatre here started
14 more than 40 years ago. Sacrificing
15 many of their own wants or needs for
16 that of the theatre. For that of people
17 young and old who needed to find
18 themselves or find a caring home.

19 So many young people stayed out of
20 trouble and stayed off the violent
21 streets because they had something to
22 occupy their time; and that was local
23 theatre. Point 1 of 1 percent? With
24 that amount of money theatre has changed
25 lives. It has and will continue to

1 Christiansen

2 change the quality and richness of
3 people's lives. Theatre and the arts in
4 Central New York is why many people come
5 and stay in Central New York. Live
6 theatre, museums, opera, art galleries,
7 the list goes on and on. When there is
8 a show other businesses reap rewards,
9 restaurants, stores, hotels.

10 I ask that you not eliminate the
11 arts from the budget. And I would
12 actually like to ask you to increase the
13 funding as the arts could definitely use
14 more money. To take away funding for
15 the arts would bring curtain down for
16 musicians and artists, actors and
17 spectators alike. Please let their
18 voices and talents continue to be heard
19 and seen. Thank you.

20 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Dave Barbosa.

21 **CHAIRMAN JORDAN:** This is the final
22 call for anyone who wishes to speak
23 tonight. If you could come up and sign
24 in if you want to speak. Thank you.

25 **DAVID BARBOSA:** Hi, my name is David

1 Barbosa

2 Barbosa, I'm a cook for the county. I'd
3 like to start by informing everybody who
4 may not know that out of the fourteen
5 employees with the cooks too and staff
6 and management eight of them are
7 military currently, they are retired,
8 and there are also some have completed
9 at least a minimum of one term. These
10 are some of the employees who will be
11 losing our jobs if the new company which
12 is coming in takes over for us.

13 I'd like to also mention that this
14 company is not a New York State company.
15 So we will now be giving jobs to
16 companies that, this one is based out of
17 Philly. I don't see how that can help
18 at all. I would like to let you know
19 that our company has done \$1.3 million
20 worth of business with local vendors.
21 This is money that you will be taking
22 away. The company coming in, they do
23 not do business with our local vendors,
24 so we'll be losing our jobs and there
25 will be local vendors losing a lot of

Barbosa

1 money by losing us.
 2 The company coming in, they have
 3 proposed a plan of 94 cents per meal.
 4 They are currently in Monroe County and
 5 they are doing it for 1.14. I think
 6 this just proves that they are making a
 7 low ball statement to get into the
 8 county, and there is no chance that
 9 they're going to be able to keep this
 10 number as they can't currently do it
 11 where they are right now.
 12 I'd also like to mention that their
 13 menu is not up to the minimum New York
 14 State, our menu is. So we are competing
 15 against a company who can make cheaper
 16 food and have a cheaper menu because
 17 their standards aren't up to what our
 18 standards are currently being held up to.
 19 I'd also like to mention that our
 20 food service managers with a college
 21 background and a military background,
 22 they proposed a \$275,000 cost savings by
 23 proposing a new menu, which is something
 24 that has yet to be looked at. We tried

Barbosa

1 to put that into play and it just, for
 2 some reason, hasn't really been taken
 3 seriously. So we don't necessarily need
 4 to lose all the cooks, we can just
 5 figure out ways to make the menu
 6 cheaper, which we have, and we could all
 7 keep our jobs and the county can have a
 8 little bit of help with the budget cut.
 9 I just would like to make it brief
 10 and let you know that there are several
 11 of us, we live here, I currently am and
 12 also a volunteer at the Apulia Fire
 13 Department. We have members of the cook
 14 staff who are volunteers at church;
 15 we're family men, family women. We
 16 would like to keep our jobs, we would
 17 like to keep in the county. We have
 18 gotten this position by having to have a
 19 minimum of five years large scale
 20 cooking. That's why a lot of us are
 21 military. I cooked on submarines. I'm
 22 currently in the United States Naval
 23 Reserves, I just come back from doing a
 24 tour in Korea, I've done a tour in

Barbosa

1 Africa, and I have another member
 2 sitting out here just came back from the
 3 desert as well.
 4 These are the people that work for
 5 the county, these are the people we're
 6 fighting to try to keep employed with
 7 the county. We do a very good job and
 8 we are more than willing to work with
 9 you to make cuts to help out the budget.
 10 But we are not willing to give up our
 11 jobs. So thank you very much.
 12 **CHAIRMAN JORDAN:** Thank you very
 13 much, if there are no other public
 14 comments I'm declaring the comment
 15 period to be closed. If there are
 16 comments or closing remarks by any
 17 members of the Ways and Means Committee,
 18 now is the time to make your comments or
 19 remarks. Okay, I'm hereby declaring
 20 this Committee meeting closed.
 21 [Conclusion of Meeting at 10:34 pm].
 22 * * * *
 23
 24
 25

Barbosa

C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that I am a
 Certified Shorthand Reporter and Notary
 Public in and for the State of New York,
 that I attended and reported the above
 entitled proceedings, that I have
 compared the foregoing with my original
 minutes taken therein and that it is a
 true and correct transcript thereof and
 all of the proceedings had therein.

John F. Drury
 John F. Drury, CSR, RPR

Dated: October 13, 2010

September 7, 2010

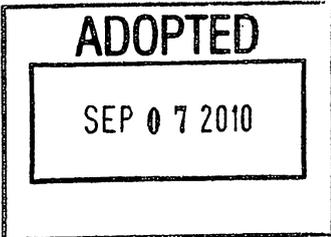
Motion Made By Mr. Jordan

RESOLUTION NO. 195

CALLING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2011 COUNTY BUDGET

RESOLVED, that pursuant to Article VI of the Onondaga County Charter, this Legislature hereby determines a Public Hearing on the Tentative County Budget, the Capital Program, and the Budget Message submitted by the Ways and Means Committee of the County Legislature for the fiscal year 2011, shall be held at the Legislative Chambers in the County Courthouse, 401 Montgomery Street, Syracuse, New York, which committee is hereby designated to hold such a hearing on Thursday, October 7, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. (local time).

2011Budget.Public.Hearing
kmf



I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND EXACT COPY OF LEGISLATION DULY ADOPTED BY THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE OF ONONDAGA COUNTY ON THE

7th DAY OF September, 2010.

Deborah A. Matero

CLERK, COUNTY LEGISLATURE
ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK

FILED WITH CLERK
ONON. CO. LEG.

Aug 12, 2010
RF

10 AUG 13 AM 8:58

RECEIVED
ONONDAGA COUNTY
LEGISLATURE



Onondaga County Legislature

DEBORAH L. MATURO
Clerk

JAMES M. RHINEHART
Chairman

JOHANNA H. ROBB
Deputy Clerk

401 Montgomery Street • Court House • Room 407 • Syracuse, New York 13202
Phone: 315.435.2070 Fax: 315.435.8434
www.ongov.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – October 1, 2010

Contact Info: Deborah L. Maturo, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature
(315) 435-2070
dmaturo@ongov.net

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE 2011 TENTATIVE BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING – VENUE CHANGE

The Onondaga County Legislature's Ways & Means Committee will hold its 2011 tentative budget public hearing in the **Ball Room, Oncenter, 800 South State Street, on Thursday, October 7, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.** The hearing was originally scheduled to be held in the Legislature's Chamber, 401 Montgomery Street.

The State Street doors to the OnCenter will open at 6:00 p.m., at which time sign up will begin for those wishing to speak.

For additional information, please contact Deborah L. Maturo, Clerk, Onondaga County Legislature, 435-2070 or dmaturo@ongov.net.

The Post-Standard

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

State of New York, County of Onondaga ss. Deborah Lajes, of the City of Syracuse, in said County, being duly sworn, doth depose and says: this person is the Principal Clerk in the office of THE POST-STANDARD, a public newspaper, published in the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York and that the notice, is an accurate and true copy of the ad as printed in said newspaper, was printed and published in the regular edition and issue of said newspaper on the following days, viz.:

Advertiser: COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Reference #: 0000227232

PO #: Public Hearing

Product: Post-Standard-Full Run

Start Date: 09/29/2010

End Date: 09/29/2010

Insertions: 1

Run Dates: 09/29/2010



Deborah Lajes
Principal Clerk

Subscribed and Sworn to before me, this 09/29/2010



LAURA M. SCALES
Notary Public, State of New York
No. 01SC6210783
Qualified In Onondaga County
My Commission Expires: 8/31/13

NOTARY PUBLIC, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NY Commission Expires

September 7, 2010
Motion Made By Mr.
Jordan RESOLUTION
NO. 195 CALLING FOR
A PUBLIC HEARING ON
THE 2011 COUNTY
BUDGET RESOLVED,
that pursuant to Article
VI of the Onondaga
County Charter, this
Legislature hereby de-
termines a Public Hear-
ing on the Tentative
County Budget, the
Capital Program, and
the Budget Message
submitted by the Ways
and Means Committee
of the County Legisla-
ture for the fiscal year
2011, shall be held at
the Legislative Cham-
bers in the County
Courthouse, 401 Mont-
gomery Street, Syra-
cuse, New York, which
committee is hereby
designated to hold
such a hearing on
Thursday, October 7,
2010 at 7:00 p.m. (local
time).



To Serve and Protect!



Navarino Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.

PO BOX 15004 • 3276 AMBER ROAD • SYRACUSE, NEW YORK 13215

Emergency # 911

Fire Station # 673-3260

September 28, 2010

Onondaga County Legislature
401 Montgomery Street #407
Syracuse, New York 13202-2127

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Navarino Fire Department and Ambulance, I am writing to encourage you to continue the services of Air One for the upcoming year. The invaluable service Air One provides to the Fire and EMS community in Onondaga County should not be measured by cost, but by the lives it has saved. Air One can transport a critical patient to University Hospital from most parts of the county within 10 minutes. By ground it could take 30 minutes or longer to arrive. The amount of time saved makes all the difference when getting a patient definitive care.

As you know, Onondaga County is made up of mostly volunteers. During the daytime hours many of our volunteers are at work and there is a shortage of manpower. If there is a brush fire during the day, Air One can utilize their Bambi bucket to put the fire out, not having to attempt to do this with what few volunteers are available during the day. No other air service provides this service. Air One is also utilized for locating lost citizens in wooded or heavy brush areas. There has been a program developed for people with Alzheimer's to find them, through a bracelet worn. Air One's high tech system can locate these people that have wandered off. Yet again, saving lives.

We fully support the Air One program and the individuals that make it possible. We encourage you to keep Air One in the budget.

Sincerely,

Donald Krick 1st Assistant Chief

10 SEP 29 AM 11:44
RECEIVED
ONONDAGA COUNTY
LEGISLATURE



Syracuse Convention & Visitors Bureau
CenterState Corp. for Economic Opportunity
572 S. Salina St.
Syracuse, NY 13202

RECEIVED
ONONDAGA COUNTY
LEGISLATURE
10 SEP 30 PM 12:15

September 28, 2010

Ms. Deborah Maturo
Onondaga County Legislature
407 Court House
Syracuse, NY 13202

Dear Ms. Deborah Maturo, *Deb*

Thank you for the opportunity to come before the Onondaga County Legislature's Ways and Means Committee to present the proposed 2011 budget and program plans for CenterState CEO's Syracuse Convention and Visitors Bureau (SCVB).

Successful recruitment of conventions, sporting events, meetings, trade shows and leisure visitors by the SCVB produces travel spending, employment opportunities, and tax revenues. In fact, as the enclosed Mid-Year Report indicates, SCVB sales programs thus far in 2010 produced 46 bookings of future event-related business for Onondaga County. This business is projected to generate \$37 million in future travel spending. The \$37 million of booked future events will directly support 600 tourism sector jobs. These future events are also projected to generate \$2.6 million in local tax revenue and \$2.4 million in state tax revenue that will not have to be paid by our local residents.

This \$37 million of travel spending is calculated across these 46 events using a formula provided by Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI). The formula is based the type of event and the number of delegates. The formula makes a clear distinction between local and overnight spending levels. It should be noted that this formula does not include any multiplier effects of indirect travel spending. We tested the formula in 2007 to see how well it held locally and the results showed a very close correlation to the DMAI numbers. These formulas are also enclosed for your reference.

When compared directly to the specific line items of the SCVB sales budget, the resulting return on investment for this \$37 million book of business is a staggering \$41.79 in travel spending for every dollar invested. When assessed across the entire County investment into the SCVB budget, the return on investment figure is still a lofty \$27.97 in travel spending for every dollar invested.

Clearly the programs and operations of the Syracuse Convention and Visitors Bureau pay off for this County. The SCVB competes heavily with both in-state and out-of-state destinations to generate this continued stream of business for our community. Reductions to the SCVB budget make our destination less competitive in the fierce marketplace and jeopardize our ability to generate future business. As you can see by the Mid-Year Report, the need for future business is clearly present with 2012 and 2013 showing significant drops compared to 2010 and 2011.

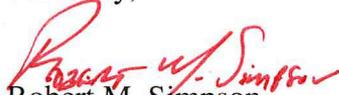
Your support for the SCVB investment from Room Occupancy Tax collections is greatly needed and appreciated. We will use this funding to grow our area's book of future tourism business and support the efforts of our business partners. For instance, we are currently working with Syracuse University to bring a NCAA Women's Regional Basketball event to our destination. The NCAA requires that its colleges and universities partner with professional destination marketing organizations to assemble and implement their various tournament events. Additionally, other events such as the Syracuse Ironman 70.3, Bass Masters, Skills USA, Sweet Adelines, King Of Trucks, Syracuse Nationals, and the US Bowling Congress Women's Championship (just to name a few) depend on the programs and resources of the SCVB to help maximize their success. We will certainly continue to do our part to grow this vibrant aspect of our area's economy.

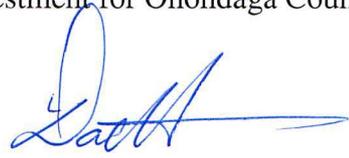
The competition for tourism business is fierce. Just for perspective, the following chart shows how our competitors are funded to pursue this marketplace. The SCVB enters this competition at a disadvantage against two primary competitors – Buffalo and Rochester – and at a lower percentage funding rate than virtually all other New York State competitors.

	Room Tax Funding	% of total Room Tax Collections	Number of Hotel Rooms	Funding per Hotel Room
Lake Placid	\$1,620,212	95%	2,000	\$810
Niagara Falls	\$1,026,960	80%	5,000	\$205
Ithaca	\$917,000	54%	1,887	\$486
Buffalo	\$3,250,000	41%	9,320	\$349
Rochester	\$2,795,000	40%	7,140	\$391
Saratoga Springs	\$743,639	40%	2,539	\$293
Syracuse	\$1,572,500	29%	6,500	\$242
Albany	\$910,217	20%	7,000	\$130

Your support through the 2011 budget will certainly help increase tourism for the future of Onondaga County. The impacts will be felt by our businesses and residents as the industry grows and produces even greater levels of return on investment for Onondaga County.

Sincerely,


 Robert M. Simpson
 President & CEO
 CenterState CEO


 David C. Holder
 President
 Syracuse CVB

cc: County Executive Joanne Mahoney
 cc: Clerk of the Legislature Deborah Maturo



MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS, & SPORTS Formula for Calculating Travel Spending

Professional and Trade Organizations

\$266 per day x 3.6 days x # of delegates

Social-Military-Education-Religious-Fraternal (SMERF) groups & Sports

\$203 per day x 3.6 days x # of delegates

If the event being calculated has a large number of locally based attendees, the number of delegates will be constructed separately for overnight visitors and day-trippers:

of room nights x 1.05 (est. pp per room) = # of out-of-town delegate

The local delegate formula in this case will be:

of local delegates x \$32

Formula provided by Destination Marketing Association International, 2006

Randall Travel Marketing Visitor Intercept Survey 2007

Intercept interviews were conducted in 2007 to test the DMAI formula and showed a very close correlation between our actual group business and the formula applied to measure its impact.

\$279.73 per day per party x 3.72 days

THE STATUS OF ONONDAGA COUNTY TOURISM

For the first eight months of 2010, tourism industry performance in Onondaga County saw significant increases compared to 2009. A number of items were responsible for this spark including an improving economy, continued growth in Canadian visitation, and added stimulation from events booked prior to 2010. Despite all of this favorable news, concerns abound for the future.

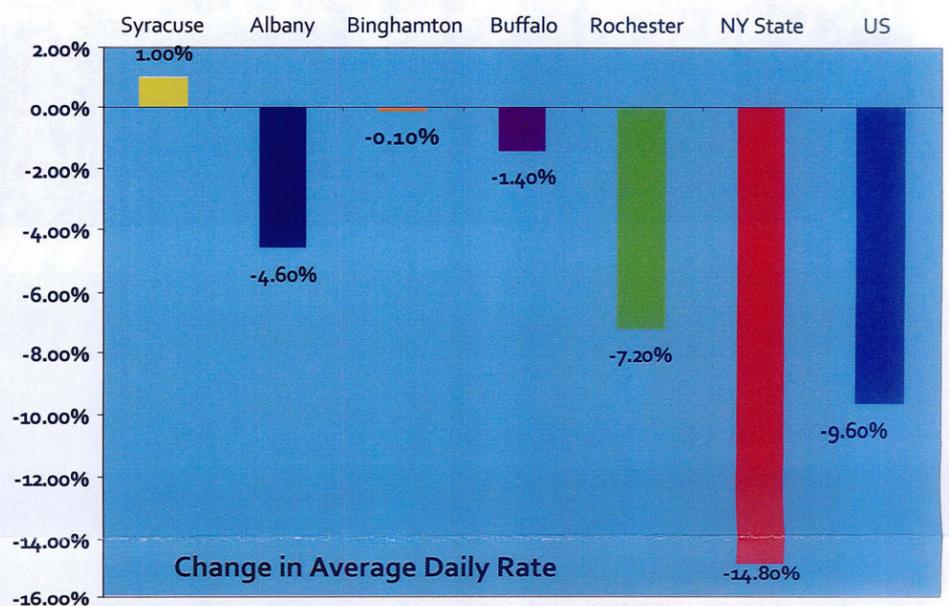
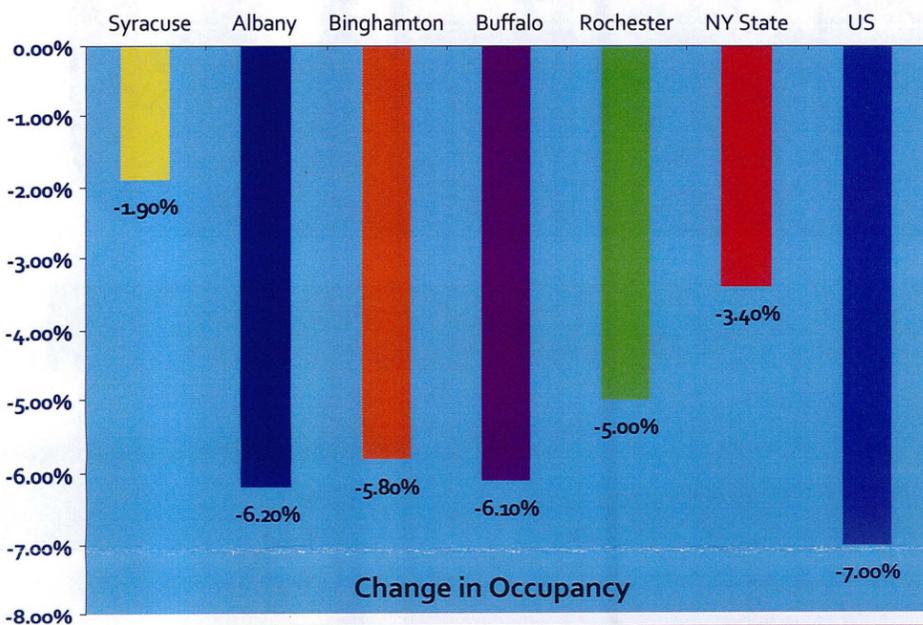
The County Executive has talked extensively about having to do less with less. For 2010, the SCVB worked diligently to continue to do more with less. Unfortunately our competition is not having to live by the same constraints. Our results are not sustainable without revived investment to bring our area's sales and marketing program to a more competitive level.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	% change 08-09
Direct Travel Spending (in millions)	\$719,504	\$747,799	\$776,903	\$715,632	-7.9%
Direct Employment	12,365	11,574	11,778	11,613	-1.4%
Total Taxes Generated (in millions)	\$88,258	\$104,547	\$102,820	\$97,175	-5.5%

Taxpayer Savings

Without tourism, each Onondaga County household would have paid an additional **\$533** in taxes (state and local combined) in 2009.

Hotel Industry Performance 2010 compared to 2008 (July YTD comparisons)



DELIVERING RESULTS — MARKETING



Unique Visitors to
www.VisitSyracuse.org
August 31, 2009: 89,980
August 31, 2010: 80,837

Decrease of 7%

Facebook Fans
August 31, 2009: 4,200
August 31, 2010: 6,976

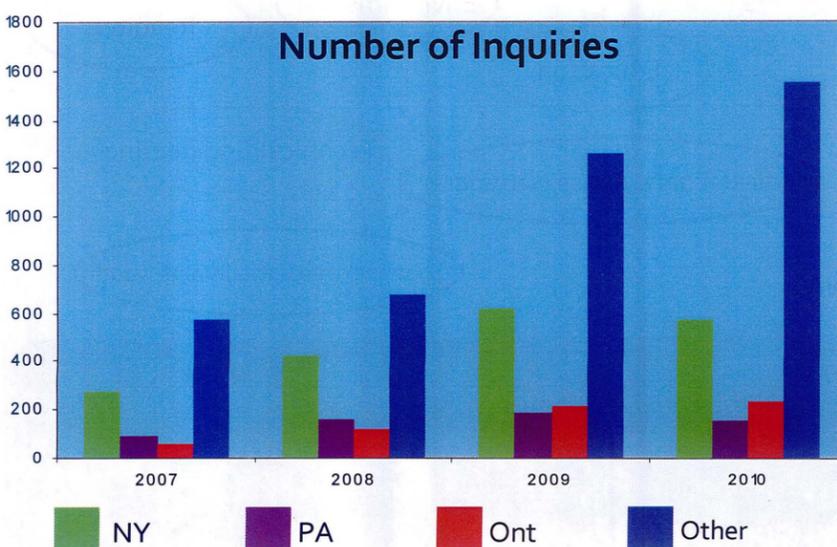


Increase of 66%



Twitter Followers
August 31, 2009: 500
August 31, 2010: 1,198

Increase of 139%



Syracuse in the Spotlight

Public relations outreach took a greater role in SCVB programming in 2010 albeit in a limited budget capacity. Here are some of the direct successes:



DELIVERING RESULTS — SALES

TOTAL BID

95 total request for proposals issued in 2010 representing **71,115** Total Room Nights of future business (up 50% over 2009)

TOTAL BOOKED

46 total bookings representing **13,645** total room nights (down 60% from YTD 2009)

STILL OUTSTANDING

40 current outstanding bids representing **34,656** room nights and **\$22 million** in travel spending will reach decisions before year end

All Future Group Event Business

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Room Nights	36,342	80,293	9,955	2,225
Estimated Travel Spending	\$67.1 million	\$83.5 million	\$27.8 million	\$3.45 million

Still Pending Business Prospects (Tentatives)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Room Nights	540	12,789	11,046	9,258	6,020
Estimated Travel Spending	\$522,400	\$14.4 million	\$7.9 million	\$14 million	\$4.4 million

LOOK WHO'S COMING IN 2011

Meeting	Location	Estimated Travel Spending
NYS Vegetable Growers Association	Oncenter	\$1.3 million
Special Olympics — NY	Oncenter/County Parks	\$730,800
NYS Skills	NYS Fairgrounds	\$2 million
Syracuse Nationals	NYS Fairgrounds	\$13 million
King of Trucks	NYS Fairgrounds	\$5 million
USBC Women's Championship	Oncenter	\$45 million
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)	Holiday Inn Liverpool	\$1.1 million
B.A.S.S. Open Championship	County Parks	\$2.2 million
Amateur Softball Association	Hopkins Road Park	\$329,000
Health Research Inc. Vital Signs Conference	Oncenter	\$2.1 million

\$41.79 return on investment of SCVB Group Sales Program for every \$1 spent

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

Stay focused on delivering greater results including:

USBC Women's Championship

Significant visitor services (44,000 prospective visitors spending \$45 million)

Convention Development

Collaborative sales & marketing to significantly boost the size of events coming into the area

Media Relations

Reinvesting in our area's image through targeted and enhanced public relations programming

Collateral

Expand print run of visitors guide and new, print on demand meeting planners guide

Marketing

Continued investment in innovative technologies and online promotions

Sales

Heightened sales targeting of local market connections for increased group business

Event Support

Providing funding support to initiate key economic producing events for the Syracuse area

Targeted Sales Market Segments for 2011



In January, the Syracuse Convention and Visitors Bureau became one of the first 100 destination marketing organizations in the world to be accredited by our industry trade association. Accreditation provides a third party endorsement that the operations, programs, practices, governance, and accountability of the SCVB is at or above accepted industry standards.

10/05/10

County Legislature Members:

I am writing to you for two reasons, requesting your support of the Sheriff's Air One program, and preventing layoffs of Onondaga County Sheriff Police Deputies.

Air One is relied upon by law enforcement agencies throughout Onondaga County for a variety of reasons and contributes to the safety of police officers. Air One is called upon to assist in the search for missing persons, to include those who have dementia or are suicidal; missing children; potential drowning victims; snowmobilers who have gone through the ice or are stranded in areas inaccessible by others; boaters who need assistance; rescuing hikers from ravines too steep for the fire/rescue service to reach the victim(s) quickly and safely; assisting fire departments at working fire scenes; locating criminal suspects, including those fleeing from the police and/or armed encounters with victims; and the list goes on.

Although their mission is criminal enforcement, Air One is often the first helicopter on the scene of serious automobile, ATV and snowmobile accidents. And though their mission is not solely that of Medevacs I don't believe any of the victims whom the Paramedics have landed to help, or those who have been airlifted because they are in need of critical care, would argue the value of this service. I pray I never need such a service but am comforted knowing its available if I or a member of my family do.

Chairman Rinehart and others from the Legislature have publicly stated the services of Air One are not needed as their calls could be handled by the New York State Police or Mercy Flight. This is not an accurate statement. A New York State Police helicopter is often unavailable during the daylight hours and seldom available at night time.

Mercy Flight, when available, can perform Medevac operations, however they are not always the closest helicopter to the incident. Timing is everything when a patient needs medical assistance and transport to a hospital. Mercy Flight cannot perform the police missions of Air One to assist police officers throughout Onondaga County on highly dangerous police activities.

To take Air One out of service would be a grave disservice to the members of the police community and the citizens of this county.

The second part of my message is to urge you to vote no in cutting police deputy positions. Onondaga County Deputies fulfill a variety of services to the citizens of this county. Although Patrol is the primary mission, deputies are assigned to specialized units such as IMPACT, Gun Violence Task Force, Gang Task Force, DEA Task Force, Felony Warrants, and the Abused Persons Unit to name a few.

The work of these deputies is essential to the safety and security of the citizens of Onondaga County. If the work force is reduced it is from these units that the officers will be taken to fulfill Patrol duties. Many of these specialized units have grant funding which was accepted by you, the legislature. To take deputies from these units would be irresponsible.

I appreciate the work you have done and that which lies ahead while you face difficult decisions during this budget process. I urge you to find other ways in which to balance the budget so that Deputy positions are not abolished and Air One remains in service.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,
Kim Brennan
Camillus

10 OCT -5 - AM 10:27
RECEIVED
ONONDAGA COUNTY
LEGISLATURE

*"Forging Our Community'
United Strength"*

CHARLOTTE (CHUCKIE) HOLSTEIN
Executive Director

City Hall Common
201 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, New York 13202-143
(315) 448-8732 • Fax 448-8733
E-Mail: focus@ci.syracuse.ny.us
www.focussyracuse.org

F.O.C.U.S. GREATER SYRACUSE
Forging Our Community's United Strength
\$9,400 grant

MISSION: F.O.C.U.S. is a citizen driven organization that taps citizen creativity to impact change in Central New York by enabling citizens, organizations, and government to work together to enhance the quality of our lives and our economic future. F.O.C.U.S. engages in research, public policy advocacy, public education and public outreach to promote intelligent, inclusive, sustainable decision making.

HISTORY: In 1998 F.O.C.U.S. convened hundreds of vision sessions throughout the Central New York region with thousands of people who shared their dreams and vision for our community's future. That process generated over 15,500 ideas that were translated into eighty-seven (87) goals to advance the quality of life in our community. F.O.C.U.S. is committed to identifying existing resources and initiating projects that advance the building of a livable, sustainable community in collaboration with government, businesses, nonprofit agencies and especially the ordinary citizen. This is accomplished by citizens working in partnership with government, businesses, non-profit organizations and in the neighborhoods.

**F.O.C.U.S. SUPPORTS ONONDAGA COUNTY BY ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF LIFE
FOR ALL CITIZENS.**

F.O.C.U.S. BUILDS CAPACITY AND INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL BY OFFERING OPPORTUNITIES for INDIVIDUALS, INSTITUTIONS, and COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS to collaborate and cooperate together with government, non-profits, and businesses that work to improve our environment, social justice, and our economic future.

QUOTE from F.O.C.U.S. high school intern now at S.U.: "I want to thank you for what you and all of F.O.C.U.S. do. I am currently taking a political science class and I always think of you (F.O.C.U.S.) and how you apply what we learn in class to real life..."

- **F.O.C.U.S. INVOLVES CITIZENS IN RESEARCH, PUBLIC POLICY PLANNING, ADVOCACY, PUBLIC EDUCATION, AND PUBLIC OUTREACH BY INVOLVING CITIZENS TO CREATE "CITIZENS ACTION/STRATEGIC PLANS"**
 - **Arts and Culture Downtown Citizens Strategic Plan:**
 - **OUTCOMES: 1) City of Syracuse Ordinance #453 designating Downtown Syracuse the Syracuse City Cultural District, 2) Formation of Cultural Commission, 3) Increased number of outdoor public art displays in public areas and parks**
- *QUOTE from citizen participant: "Following this experience, I remain firmly convinced that an informed and active citizen is the best tool we have to address a complex and changing world".*
 - **Water and Waterways Citizens Strategic Plan for Onondaga County:**
 - **OUTCOMES: 1) Citizens involved in plans for improving Onondaga Creek, 2) F.O.C.U.S. takes citizens to tour County Waste Water Treatment Facility to learn how county is cleaning waste water, 3) F.O.C.U.S. provides opportunities for citizen input in Honeywell, DEC, and Onondaga County clean up plans for Onondaga Lake**
- *QUOTE from citizen participant: "There are so many disparate groups involved in cleaning up and restoring our waterways that thanks to F.O.C.U.S. most of these groups come together to share knowledge and keep avenues of communication open".*
 - **Building Sustainable Communities Citizens Strategic Plan:**
 - **OUTCOMES: 1) Networking economic development opportunities for green entrepreneurs F.O.C.U.S. partners with Tech Garden, Clean Tech Center, SBA, NYS SBDC at OCC 2) F.O.C.U.S. recommended and offered ideas for Office of Sustainability for County and City, 3) F.O.C.U.S. involved in City Hall Commons renovation for energy efficiency (first solar panels used downtown).**

- *QUOTE from citizen participant: "F.O.C.U.S. brings together a cross-section of our population, blending individuals of various ethnic, religious, political and socio-economic groups. I believe this solidifies the notion that we ARE one community, but maintain our individual cultures".*
 - **Walking, Hiking, Biking, Wheeling Citizens Strategic Plan:**
 - **OUTCOMES: 1) Citizens are involved in planning with and for County and City Parks and Recreation Departments to create biking, hiking, walking trails, 2) Professional urban designers and planners alongside ordinary citizens volunteer their expertise and time including CNY Regional Development and Planning Board, SMTC, City DPW, NYS DOT, SOCPA, and OEI, 3) Town of Dewitt is working with F.O.C.U.S. creating new trails to connect with other towns, 4) Audits of pedestrian crossings completed by citizens are made available to government departments and AARP.**
 - *QUOTE from team member: "We are finally making progress on the top preferred F.O.C.U.S. goal to build bicycle paths, hiking trails, walkers' paths, everywhere".*
 - **COMMUNITY INDICATORS, data compiled and published for 2000, 2005, 2010**
 - **OUTCOMES: 1) Partnership with Community Benchmarks Program of Maxwell School, S.U. and CNY Community Foundation to produce up-to-date website, 2) Indicators Report grew from 12 pages in 2000 to over 200 pages in 2010 because Community Benchmarks program now provides an entire class to collect data and report on the findings, 3) CNYCF, Community Benchmarks, and F.O.C.U.S will produce an updated website that includes citizen input.**
 - *QUOTE from foundation officer: "Indicators gives us the insight to know the community's assets and challenges helping the foundation set funding priorities".*
 - **CDC PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FORUM FOR PANDEMIC FLU: F.O.C.U.S. arranged for Onondaga County to be selected one of only four regions in U.S.**
 - **OUTCOMES: 1) 100 citizens met for one full day to learn and react to how they would respond to an outbreak of pandemic flu, 2) collection of Syracuse citizen responses published in a report distributed nationally and worldwide (WHO) 2) CDC invited F.O.C.U.S. to again conduct citizen engagement forum to collect information on the National Flu Plan and again almost 100 citizens spent a full day offering advice and ideas to the national program.**
- QUOTE from citizen participant: "I believe it is our civic responsibility when asked by government agencies for feedback to provide as much opinion as possible. I saw it as an opportunity to influence public policy and to make sure the priorities of me and the people that we know are taken into account when public policy is being set".*
- **CIVILITY IN PUBLIC DISCOURSE** is a F.O.C.U.S. project in partnership with PARCC (the Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration) in the Maxwell School, S.U. and CNY Speaks
 - **OUTCOMES: 1) Raise awareness of the problem of uncivil public behavior, 2) Raise awareness of available resources, 3) Identify processes, 4) Model appropriate meeting facilitation, 5) Compile tips for running successful meetings, and 6) Deepen our understanding of citizens' perceptions about civil public discourse -- what is it and why we need it (or do not), 7) Learn about what citizens want to see and have happen at public meetings, 8) Get citizens' ideas about how to make civil public discourse work in CNY, 9) Use what we learn in this forum to develop resources for citizens, public officials, and civic leaders to use at future public forums.**
 - **CITIZENS ACADEMY: F.O.C.U.S. and University College of Syracuse University operate the "CITIZENS ACADEMY", a free interactive educational program that informs citizens about how local governments are organized and how services are funded and delivered. In 6 years 210 citizens have completed the 8 week course of study.**
 - **OUTCOMES: 1) Graduates have run for political office in towns, villages, county and city, 2) TNT facilitators and TNT are active members of Academy bringing factual information back to neighborhoods, 3) Upon completion of the course, students have established local foods program,**

formed a collaboration to open a grocery store or farmers market on the SouthSide, accepted appointments to city and county commissions, created a new program to alleviate poverty, become a green entrepreneur, and others.

- *QUOTES from graduates: "The experience was one of the few times in which people of all different walks of life were in one room – and given the opportunity to express their opinions and concerns in an environment that encouraged communication and growth". "I have already gotten involved in TNT and a committee for Onondaga Creek ...I wish I could go through it again because I know I would learn even more". "...to be honest, I had never even voted and I am currently 49 years old. I always felt like I didn't have enough knowledge or understanding of the issues to make an informed decision. The class opened my eyes and provided avenues to get information and people to contact.."*

MONTHLY CORE GROUP INFORMATION SESSIONS: Topics relate to economic vitality, social equity, and environmental stewardship. Presenters are experts in a particular field. In 12 years there have been 144 sessions, 270 presenters and an average monthly attendance of just under 100.

- **OUTCOMES:** 1) Attendees receive factual information that they pass on to colleagues, family and friends, 2) Presenters hear what is on the minds of ordinary citizens, 3) everyone is welcome, 4) meetings bring people downtown, some for the first time, 5) attendees represent a cross section of the area, 6) sessions are free.

F.O.C.U.S. MONTHLY COMMUNICATION: Over 1,600 people receive information about current issues on sustainability and are notified of the monthly informative sessions

- **OUTCOMES:** 1) citizens are kept informed of current community issues, 2) citizens find out where to find more information and resources.

FINANCIAL AND IN-KIND SUPPORT for F.O.C.U.S. comes from government, corporations, non-profit organizations, foundations, and ordinary citizens. The founding of F.O.C.U.S. in 1998 was supported financially by the generosity of the Gifford Foundation and the CNY Community Foundation, Onondaga County and City of Syracuse. F.O.C.U.S. fund raising is dependent on corporate sponsorships raised at public events. The City and County governments each give a small grant. The City of Syracuse gives F.O.C.U.S. in-kind office space, and utilities. University College of Syracuse University funds the Citizens Academy. Board members, loaned staff from colleges and universities, businesses and non-profit organizations and interns help with operations pro bono. All expert Presenters provide services for no fee and sites for Citizens Academy are free.

F.O.C.U.S. BUILDS INDIVIDUAL, INSTITUTIONAL, AND COMMUNITY CAPACITY

F.O.C.U.S. BUILDS A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

"BE+"



Greetings: Mr. Chairman & Members of the Legislature

I come before you tonight to ask you to use common sense when looking at budget cuts. We cannot cave to the pressure of special interest groups, but do what is best for the citizens of Onondaga County.

Knee jerk reaction to budget problems will not move this county into a more secure future.

Let me talk about some of the most selfless employees of Onondaga County: our snow plowers. We have some of the safest roads in Central New York, because of these men and women. To talk about moving our snowplowing from the county to the towns makes no sense. We have the personnel, equipment, and facilities to do the job correctly & safely. Many of the towns have no desire to take over the plowing.

We must keep the tow truck which its driver says is structurally sound and does over eighty tows per year, of county and town vehicles. At

Eight hundred to fifteen hundred per tow, it makes no sense to sell
back and layoff the operator who is also a mechanic. USE
COMMON SENSE. The math doesn't add up.

The Highway Department is down many drivers and can't afford more
layoffs, the department has sent out a memo asking for people to
sign up for wing persons this coming winter. This department can run
with the equipment we currently have. Cut equipment purchases, not
positions.

Let's talk about Correctional Health. The union of the opinion that we
can give Correctional Health and Food Services better than
contracted out vendors that are located outside of Onondaga County.
The county has said that it is willing to contract out the health
services even if it cost more than it currently costs. Let's use
COMMON SENSE. The county has done little to nothing to hire a
new doctor to oversee the health services, rather it ran away from the
issue and try to contract it out. Contracting out is not the solution to
rough problems. Let me ask you how contracting out the OnCenter
has worked for us? Mismanagement of money has lead to more over

site by the county and taking over the cleaning and maintenance of the buildings by Facilities.

The Correction Food Services had proposed cuts to the current costs of the service to save the bottom line. Bringing in a contractor from outside the county will hurt local food vendors as well as the service as a whole. We contracted out the service years ago only to bring it back to the county workers to do. THE UNION WILL NOT SIT BACK AND ALLOW THE COUNTY TO CONTRACT OUT OUR JOBS! We have exclusive rights to this work and will legally challenge any moves to contract out that work.

We ask the Legislature to look at upgrades proposed to management at Parks and yet close down Pratts Falls and layoff more hardworking employees.

The union had already been hurt by last year's layoffs and early retirement. We cannot afford to give up more jobs. Cutting jobs of the lower paid positions at Van Duyn and the Library just doesn't add up.

Let us look at the real problem in Onondaga County and across New York State, the cost of Medicaid. Fifty three percent of county taxes are for mandated Medicaid services. We have to decide whether to keep open Park and support the arts, yet we have no say on these mandates. It is time for taxpayers of New York State to rise up together and say enough is enough. You have all heard the numbers; we spend more money in New York State for Medicaid than the two next largest spending Medicaid states: California and Texas, COMBINED!! We can no longer afford this kind of spending. A three percent cap on spending is hardly slowing down this runaway train. We must reach out to our state representatives and say enough already. Medicaid cutbacks are needed.

I ask the Legislature to use common sense. The towns and villages have been shielded by severe cuts that the county has absorbed the past few years. It is time for them to feel the pinch. They must also look at consolidation and cutback to services. The County Executive talked on the radio today about working with anyone that will further Onondaga County. How about working with the unions and the

Legislature? We can get much more done by working together than by ourselves.

CSEA lobbied hard to make sure that the Federal Government provided our counties with Federal FMAP money. Onondaga County is supposed to receive nearly \$7 million dollars of that money, which is supposed to be specifically used to avoid layoffs of public workers. We would like to know if this money has been used for this purpose, and if so, why are we talking about increasing the amount of layoffs in this budget?

I don't know about what back room agreements that were made for the use of sales tax money by the County Executive and the Legislature but let's all take a deep breath and use a clear mind to make the right decisions. The cuts to jobs and services should be fair and equitable among everyone that is affected by this budget.

We believe that we need a new spirit of labor-management cooperation in Onondaga County, where we can work together to

solve our budget issues and come up with positive solutions that will move our county forward and not negatively impact the quality of life services that CSEA members provide.

Some people may say that the words common sense and politicians do not belong together in the same sentence, but I trust that you can and will do the right thing.

Thank you for your time tonight.

SPEECH

I will keep this brief. We have all read, seen and heard the numerous benefits of full staffing of the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office and AIR 1. There really is no need to repeat them.

My name is David Steinberg. I am here tonight as the President of the Onondaga County Fire Chief's Assn. I was born and raised in Onondaga County. I am also here tonight with almost 35 years in the Fire and Emergency Medical Services in Onondaga County. Additionally I am President of my family business GEM Sport Supply / Ra-Lin Sporting Goods on Burnet Avenue. And I am a Tax Payer.

The reason for me being here tonight is to offer my support and request your support for AIR 1 and the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office. I firmly believe that any cuts or reduction in service will have tragic results. The life it costs could be mine.

Thank you for your time and please drive home carefully.

MY NAME IS RICHARD "DICK" BEACH

I HAVE BEEN A VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER FOR OVER 60 YEARS

JOINED THE NORTH SYRACUSE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
IN 1948

ELECTED FIRE CHIEF IN 1958 & 1959

1ST DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS IN NAVAC, WAS ON THEIR FIRST
CALL 40 YEARS AGO.

EMPLOYED AS FIRE DISPATCHER FOR ONONDAGA COUNTY IN
1970, FIRE CONTROL WAS THEN IN THE MATTYDALE FIRE
STATION.

1971 EMPLOYED AS ONONDAGA COUNTY ASSISTANT FIRE
COORDINATOR

RETIRED IN 1990 FROM ONONDAGA COUNTY (20 YEARS
SERVICE)

I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT AIR ONE.

THIS MACHINE IS LIKE NO OTHER IN THE CENTRAL NEW YORK
AREA.

AIR ONE IS A VITAL TOOL OF EVERY PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCY IN
THIS COUNTY. YES EVERY FIRE DEPARTMENT BOTH PAID AND
VOLUNTEER, POLICE AGENCYS, AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL
PROVIDERS DEPEND ON THIS UNITS ABILITY TO RESOLVE THEIR
PROBLEMS QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY.

NOTHING ELSE IS AVAILABLE TO OUR PUBLIC SAFETY UNIT
THAT CAN REPLACE AIR ONE.

I HONESTLY BELIEVE IF AIR ONE IS TAKEN AWAY WE WILL
NEVER BE ABLE TO REPLACE IT. IT WILL BE GONE FOREVER

WE NEED YOUR HELP NOW TO ASSURE THAT THIS LIFE SAVING
TOOL WILL CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE TO ALLOW THE PUBLIC
SAFETY AGENCIES OF ONONDAGA COUNTY TO SERVE OUR
CITIZENS WITH ~~ALL~~ THE HELP OF "AIR ONE"

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

Good evening my name is

Manny Falcone President of the Onondaga County Volunteer Firemen's Association

AIR ONE, THE FLIGHT OF YOUR LIFE

Once again, the citizens of Onondaga County including the City of Syracuse have the potential of losing one of the most valuable lifesaving tools that the Public Safety Sector can provide. As our Onondaga County legislators, present here tonight, seek an easy mark to reduce deficit in the upcoming years County budget, the target they have once again painted on our helicopter commonly known as "Air One" is bigger then ever before. It's an easy mark for the legislators because of it's big dollar line item in the budget and eliminating it would make the job of balancing the budget that much easier.

Meanwhile, the Onondaga County Fire Coalition, which consists of ranking officials from the Onondaga County Fire Chief's Association, Onondaga County Volunteer Firemen's Association, Onondaga County Volunteer Fire Police Association and the Central Region Fire Districts Association finds it necessary to express their extreme concern over the subject of grounding Air One. This

concern is not a selfish concern either, as it should be a concern of every citizen, resident and visitor to our County. That includes all of you present in this room tonight, as well as the men and women of our Legislature, their neighbors and yes, even their families. We, the fire and EMS officials know all too well, how valuable the Sheriff's helicopter has been. For over the 35 years it has been in operation, We have witnessed the numerous rescues it has performed over the many lakes, rivers, forests and rural terrain and the life saving accomplishments in transporting the critically injured from remote sections of Onondaga County to our areas hospitals in a timely fashion.

This helicopter has numerous other assets including the ability to airlift 1000 lbs of water in a special firefighting bucket to extinguish fires not easily accessible to firefighters or as an airborne search vessel for missing persons. The other end of the spectrum involves Air One's capabilities as a tool for the police end of public safety, YOUR public safety. Think very seriously about it. Do you want to lose the peace of mind of knowing that if disaster were to strike in any number of ways to you or a loved one, wouldn't you like to know that you have available, one of

our most valuable tools to come to your immediate assistance? Who is to know, future rescues could involve you, a friend, neighbor or even a family member.

Our legislators need to hear that and they need to hear that NOW, TONIGHT!

Mr. Rhinehart, Mr. Lesniak and Mr. Stancyk, the fire service of Onondaga County is here tonight to tell you and your fellow Legislators that we are so very much opposed to your proposal, eliminating Air One from the 2011 Onondaga County budget proposal. We urge you to reconsider and find an alternative way to reduce your proposed budget without affecting the Public Safety of every soul in Onondaga County.

All of us hope that we will never have to call upon the services of Onondaga County Air One, but if YOU The Legislature, eliminate it from the budget; none of us will even have that option.

Manny Falcone

President

Onondaga County Volunteer Firemen's Association



LEADERSHIP
GREATER SYRACUSE

Sherry A. Mossburn
Chief Executive Officer &
Executive Director

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East Syracuse, New York 13057
P: (315) 422.5471
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LEADERSHIP
GREATER SYRACUSE

Onondaga County Impact – 2010 Quick Facts

1. LGS Alumni/Graduates **have been vital to improving the attitude and perception of Onondaga County**, while at the same time making the CNY community grow and retain a qualified, civically-involved workforce.
2. **LGS consists of community-minded individuals with the time, resources, and interest to become actively involved in moving this community forward.** Combined, their efforts serve to positively and exponentially impact Onondaga County, its Towns, Schools, and Villages. **There is NO OTHER organization in Onondaga County like this!**
3. Because of Leadership Greater Syracuse, **nearly 1,000 LGS alumni/graduates are actively involved in over 350 non-profit, educational, and governmental entities** serving Onondaga County.
4. LGS was **founded by former Onondaga County Executive Nicholas Pirro, former Syracuse Mayor Thomas Young, the Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce, and OCC** in 1991. Today, LGS is known as a viable resource for connecting people – to our community's most pressing needs.
5. **This year alone, LGS has been instrumental in connecting over 150 LGS graduates to opportunities on local non-profit Boards, County, Town/Village, School & City Task Forces**, on Committees and Boards, mentoring students in inner-city schools, and in raising much-needed funds for Central New York non-profits.
6. There are **over 600 Community Leadership Organizations like LGS throughout the Country**, and most mid-sized Cities are positively impacted by the value these organizations bring to their respective communities. Many of these organizations are fully-funded by their local government, whereas government support equals only 8% of the organization's total annual budget.

7. In 2010, **LGS instituted the new CNY Political Leadership Institute to train civic-minded individuals how to assist with political campaigns**, to understand the political and election process, and how to run for office (school and town/village boards). Applicants for the inaugural program exceeded goal by 150%, and the program will be repeated beginning January, 2011.
8. **1 out of every 5 members** in the 2010 Community Leadership Class requested – and received – scholarships or tuition assistance. **In 2010, Leadership Greater Syracuse had over \$35,000 in requests** for tuition assistance. Without the limited (\$9,400) support we receive from the County, we would not be able to support these many requests.
9. In 2001, Leadership Greater Syracuse expanded its programming to include a 2nd-year **required COMMUNITY PROJECT component**:
 - a. The LGS 2003 Class implemented a **community-wide marketing campaign** known as P.R.O.P.S. -- “People Reforming Opinions Positively of Syracuse” -- which **included a website encouraging people to “move back to CNY,” a mass poster campaign during the holidays when college students/grads are home, TV ads were aired, an outreach campaign to people who have left the area**, and more.
 - b. The LGS 2004 Class **raised over \$60,000, recruited volunteers within their respective companies, and built a home for Habitat for Humanity.**
 - c. The LGS 2005 Class conducted three successful projects:
 - i. **Spring community clean up** (planting, painting, raking, etc.), at the Rescue Mission, Thornden Rose Park, and the Syracuse Boxing Club;
 - ii. Raised funds for **OnPoint for College**, solicited donations of backpacks, computers, comforters, and cash; and

- iii. **Conducted a "stay-in-school" training program** called CHOICES in one of our City's most poverty-ridden middle schools to demonstrate positive examples of job opportunities for students who may not have the opportunity to go to college.
 - d. The LGS 2006 Class **adopted the City's Grant Middle School for two years following their graduation**, providing **25** one-on-one mentors, developing a career day, painting and cleaning-up the school, and more.
 - e. LGS 2007 **developed a recruitment program and recruited mentors** within their businesses and organizations to serve as Syracuse City School District student mentors. In addition, they held a **"Senior's Soiree" at Loretto**, and developed a new **"Taste of LGS"** community-education program to educate people about the CNY community.
 - f. LGS 2008's project was centered around the clean-up of **Onondaga Lake and the education of young people** about the Lake. One component of the project included a community-leader "educational boat tour" on the lake with local politicians and business leaders to teach about the rich history and current clean-up efforts, something they learned through LGS.
 - g. LGS 2009 is currently developing a **Youth Leadership Summit to be held in November 2010**, and is presently working with all Onondaga County schools to recruit students.
10. In 2010, LGS will graduate 55 new community leaders after a year that transformed many of them into active and engaged new leaders.
 11. LGS emails **Community E-Newsletters** to 6,000 leaders in the Central New York community in an effort to support local non-profits by posting Board and volunteer opportunities, and linking people to volunteer activities.

All this and was done through the incredible help and support of the City of Syracuse, the Onondaga County Legislature, and our corporate sponsors!

Leadership Greater Syracuse has proactively offset increasing expenses through Community Sponsorships, Alumni and Board Campaigns, Events, and Corporate Fundraising.

Sherry Mossoll
Leadership Greater Syracuse

I originally came here tonight, full of enthusiasm and energy, looking forward to the opportunity to share our story of the amazing work being done by this small agency with our lawmakers...

it's something we non-profits with very limited resources and staff ever have enough time to do...

As some of you may know, Leadership Greater Syracuse was founded by Nicholas Pirro and the County of Onondaga, Mayor Tom Young, and others, with the intent of getting people actively involved in their community – which we all know

- drives our community forward,

- retains our young talent, and

- builds the community – and its workforce – that we are all so proud of...

After all, what is a town, village, or community, without its people?

Over the past couple days,

LGS alumni

LGS Board and

LGS Supporters have reached out to their Legislators to express concern over the proposed authorized agency cuts.

We at Leadership Greater Syracuse know we can't rely on government funding forever. We take the use of County tax dollars very seriously.

Over the past 8 years, LGS's reliance on County funds has gone from \$25,000 to \$9,400 in 2010.... representing a 62% decrease since 2002.

We've managed to make up those funds during an extremely difficult economy and to hold our own with a barely break-even bottom line in most years.

In fact, we were even working toward weaning our small non-profit agency away from Government funding in the next 2-3 years... but Legislators...

to go from \$9,400 today to \$0,
is a paralyzing blow, and it will threaten
this organization's existence.

We – as in years prior – had anticipated cuts... but I will tell you... we NEVER anticipated a 100% cut!

THIS IS IMPORTANT! If you hear nothing else I share with you tonight, PLEASE HEAR THIS...

Several Legislators have told THEIR constituent voters – that agencies like Leadership Greater Syracuse WILL be funded either by the Cultural Resources Trust or the Onon. Civic Development Corp.

After speaking with both of these organizations, I've learned that Leadership Greater Syracuse:

1. Doesn't meet the funding criteria of the CRT;
2. There have been NO discussions with the Boards of these Funds – who ultimately determine WHO is funded -- to ensure that this IS a viable option for the agencies on the cutting block;
3. The OCDC and CRT are going through changes that will impact funding criteria which may – or may not – make many of these same agencies ineligible; nor
4. As one Legislator put it in his response to one of our alum -- has the Legislative body checked to verify whether these organizations – as quoted as places the authorized agencies funding will be shifted to – even have the LEGAL AUTHORITY to fund those organizations being cut.

So instead of being here tonight to tell you about the amazing work that Leadership Greater Syracuse does for the residents of Onondaga County... how...

- nearly 1,000 LGS alumni/graduates are actively serving in over 350 non-profit, educational, and governmental entities serving Onondaga County citizens BECAUSE of LGS; or
- How this year alone, LGS has been instrumental in connecting over 150 LGS graduates to needs in the community and non-profit Boards, County Town/Village/School Boards and Task Forces BECAUSE of LGS; or
- About the new Political Leadership Institute we implemented this year with 150% more applicants than we'd hoped for in its inaugural year BECAUSE of LGS; or
- About the projects that each graduating class since 2001 has undertaken for the direct benefit of the County,
 - from building a home,
 - to implementing a community-wide marketing campaign,
 - to adopting poverty-ridden schools,
 - to educating community leaders about the Onondaga Lake clean-up and the wonderful history of the Lake...

These are the wonderful things – well worth the \$9,400 LGS receives in County funding and well beyond! – that I will have to just gloss over tonight...

in an effort to encourage our lawmakers to look into and talk to those very organizations you're telling your constituents will fund the many agencies that are presently on the budget chopping block...

I know these decisions are difficult, but I implore you to really consider the impact on our non-profits, and – more importantly -- **to be absolutely sure that the cuts you are making, can – in fact – be supported by those very organizations – the CRT and OCDC – that you're telling us will make up this difference.**

\$9,400 to LGS... it's pennies in the entire budget, but I can assure you that to the 1,000 alumni/graduates, the hundreds of organizations that these civic-minded individuals help to lead and grow, and the many, many Onondaga County residents who benefit from the work of Leadership Greater Syracuse and its alum... it is worth every penny of that \$9,400 of investment to the people of Onondaga County.

Thank you!

Public Hearing – Onondaga County Ways & Means 10/7/2010

Most of the towns in Onondaga County have elected to take their share of the sales tax revenue as a credit against the county property tax. In this way the town tax levies have been segregated from the county levy affording the taxpayers transparency relative to any tax increases or decreases and no doubt about which level of government to call to question those changes.

While the sales tax and the property tax are co-mingled in the final budget, the formula for each has been based on a different foundation, and for good reason.

The property tax formula is based on individual assessment of real property market value. We all understand that and we are advised of the rate per thousand dollars of assessed valuation on our tax bills.

The sales tax apportionment formula has always been based upon population, also for good reasons.

FIRST of all, it has nothing to do with real property.

SECOND, it is based on retail sales transactions which, for the most

part, take place in the most populated and developed towns. Those populations are most responsible for those sales and transactions as well as maintaining the roads, utilities, and infrastructure to support the retail centers for both local and transient shoppers. Thus, those revenues and taxes are generated in the most developed suburban towns. The more rural and “bedroom” towns take advantage of those facilities without the attendant costs associated with them.

Knowing these facts, we had no reason to fear a change in the county’s procedures relative to collecting the sales tax revenue and holding same from the outset.

Not until the disparate increases in county property taxes were published was anyone out here aware of the change in the basis for sales tax from population based to a municipality assessed valuation base.

AGAIN, Sales tax has nothing to do with real property assessments.
“PEOPLE GENERATE SALES TAX”

If, as I have been told, these tax increases are due to *Unfunded State and Federal Mandates* of fifty plus million dollars, that would account for a less than 5% increase in the budget and that could be easily explained.

These enormous projected increases are unconscionable and singularly a result of changing the way the sales tax revenues are shared, causing county property taxes to rise.

I submit, that if this wrongheaded change had not been implemented, we would not be here tonight. The legislature could be doing the work we elected them to do in their chambers and the rest of us could be out trying to earn a living to pay our taxes.

PLEASE RECTIFY THIS ILL-ADVISED CHANGE.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Fittipaldi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line through the middle.

**Donald D. Fittipaldi
115 Hawthorne Drive
Camillus, NY 13031
(315) 487-2326
dfittipa@twcny.rr.com**

Honorable members of the County Legislature.

I respectfully request your support for the continued operation of Air-1, the Sheriff's Office helicopter. As a 50 year veteran of the fire service, civilian volunteer, USAF military and 29 plus years as the Onondaga County fire coordinator, I feel I have sufficient insight and practical experience to offer a very strong statement of support for this program.

I have personally witnessed and been involved with lifesaving operations that were successful because of the response of properly and adequately trained fire, police and EMS personnel; events that would have had tragic results without Air-1.

The Air-1 program is a model of cooperation that is rare in many municipalities. Its capabilities are available upon request from any public safety official in Onondaga County, including the city of Syracuse. And, amazing as it may seem, there has been no abuse of this service. There are strict protocols in place that provide guidance on how, when and where it shall be used.

One might ask, how many heart attacks have been prevented because Air-1 was able to transport firefighters to remote locations in the county rather than have them hiking with all their equipment or because Air-1 was able to douse a brush fire with the Bambi Bucket.

I can relate an incident where Air-1 was the difference between life and death for firefighters and another that saved a municipality thousands of dollars. The first was the fire that destroyed the Syroco plant in Baldwinsville. An Onondaga County deputy fire coordinator was aboard Air-1 as it flew over the blazing factory. Only with the use of the forward-looking-infra-red (FLIR) system on the aircraft, was the deputy fire coordinator able to determine that fire was traveling underneath the steel decking of the roof creating an imminent danger to firefighters working there. Because of this resource, all firefighters were able to

exit the roof in a timely and safe manner.

In the other case that immediately comes to mind, a fire within the sealed landfill in the town of Onondaga presented the possibility of having to destroy the entire top seal to locate and extinguish the fire, replacement of which would have been very expensive.. Again through the use of the FLIR, the fire department was able to "see" exactly where the fire was burning and pierce patchable holes to apply water and extinguish the fire.

On a financial note, I spent many hours aboard Air-1 photographing the devastation of the Labor Day Storm. I was informed by then Deputy County Administrator for physical services, Jim Albanese, that those photographs were key to the county documenting infra-structure damage and receiving more than \$300,000 in additional federal relief funds.

Having more than 30 years of military experience, including flights in many different types of helicopters, including search and rescue operations from Iceland to the Mediterranean Sea, I can attest to what is required to achieve the outstanding results, and equally important the safety record of Air-1.

Statistics clearly show that the safety records of commercial medi-vac helicopter services, including those that operate locally, indicate a disturbing number crashes. The reason is quite simple. If the government helicopter is not flying, it is saving money. If the commercial service isn't flying, it is not producing revenue. The commercial services tend to have more flights in marginal weather, may scrimp on preventative maintenance and respond to calls where their intervention is not for a life or death situation. And, those that purport to be "not-for-profit" may be otherwise.

There is the potential to save millions on public safety in Onondaga County. There is and has been for years too much fire apparatus and lately fire departments are building castles for fire stations. There is a terrible waste with duplication of services in police services. I applaud county government for the

most recent sales tax distribution. The waste is in the towns and villages, not the Sheriff's Office. That's where belt tightening needs to take place. While the general population may be willing to support this extravagance with their votes; those that pay the most taxes, business and industry, can only vote with their feet and leave.

I urge you to re-think and support the Air-1 program. Sale of the helicopter would be one more, one-time budget gimmick. The ship is paid for and revenue from a sale would be insignificant in the overall financial picture and waste years of training and experience.

Mike Waters
16 Clarmar Road

Larry Martin
#21

Good evening. My name is Larry Martin and I'm on the Executive Board for the Onondaga County Deputy Sheriff's Police Association. I have been a member of the Sheriff's Office for the past 24 proud years.

It shocks me to think that members of this legislature are recommending the elimination of almost 30 members of the Sheriff's Police Union and our life saving helicopter. I can only assume that members of the legislature may not be aware of the full scope of what OCSO provides to the community. I'd like to take a moment to point out some of our highlights.

Besides our normal policing duties, police agencies from around the state depend on our department for training and certification requirements.

Our agency's K9 unit developed the NYS standards for K9 training which are in place today. We have taught the basic K9 16 week school and the required maintenance training to the benefit of over 55 K9 teams.

~~SWAT units from across the state send their officers to our SWAT academy. Our agency was involved in establishing statewide standards for SWAT training and recently held the first pilot academy.~~

Besides handling our own county reported emergencies, our SWAT members have been relied upon to settle emergency situations for the FBI, the DEA and the US Marshal's, to name a few. These federal agencies know that we can mobilize a professional force quickly and effectively to resolve dangerous incidents.

In preparation for tonight, I read a letter prepared by one of my younger colleagues. He highlighted the many dangers we face daily at our current staffing levels. I'm now trying to imagine our members attempting to handle these dangers and the ever-increasing volume of calls with 29 less members and without our eye in the sky, Air 1, which makes almost every situation safer. Vehicle pursuits can loosen up with Air 1, resulting in fewer accidents and suspects inability to outrun the chopper. Lost children and Alzheimer patients can be quickly located by air before they get injured or die from the elements. A suspect hiding in the dark can be identified before he ambushes a deputy.

Our members have proudly been providing police services to this county since 1794. We are viewed by other agencies in the state as a progressive example of modern policing. WE are who they turn to, to train in how to get it RIGHT! 216 years of development to get to the level of professionalism and statewide respect where we stand today. Your suggestion to slash us to a barebones, understaffed, less safe operation is unacceptable and insulting to the proud history, which the members of OCSPA represent. You cannot balance a budget at the expense of public safety.

Thank you for your time.

Good Evening County Legislators! Are you having fun yet?

For the few of you who don't know me, my name is Don Colon; I served on this body for 19 years, including 10 years as the chair of the Ways & Means Committee, and then served for 9 years as the County Comptroller. As the County Comptroller, I processed all the the payrolls for the County. In 2007, my Office created the payroll positions for the newly hired people starting January 1, 2008. As she was entitled to do under the County Charter and rules, the County Executive slotted all of her new hires on Grade G of their appropriate salary step. This resulted in an additional cost to the taxpayers of about \$125,000 at that time. With additional staff persons hired since then the annual cost is probably in excess of \$250,000. The Legislature additionally increased the salary of the County Attorney to an even higher grade resulting in him making almost as much as his former boss, the NYS Attorney General. I know that the Legislature was aware of this practice. Did you not think you would ever have to pay for it through taxes?

Two years ago you increased the District Attorney's Salary from the \$125,000 it was when he was elected, to \$ 160,000. I know he deserves it, but did you not think you would ever have to pay for it?

This year you passed the OCC budget. I have been unable to find out the President's salary, but I believe it is \$235,000, plus a housing allowance, an automobile, and a \$127,500. bonus if she stays through 2015. This was in addition to a \$750,000 entrance sign paid from current operating expenses in 2009. Did you not think you would ever have to pay for it?

And then we come to the coup de grace. The sales tax agreement. There is no argument the County was in a deep budgetary hole, partially due to increased expenses over which you have no control and partially to recoup one shots you used to balance last years budget. The partial solution is to increase the County's share of the 4% sales tax, which is after all a County tax, not a town, village, or school tax. However, only the Villages, Schools, City, and one Town took the sales tax as cash, which the County dearly needed. The rest was a credit against the County property tax and as such a revenue offsetting the size of the tax levy. If you took all the cash available from the towns, schools, villages and the non-statutory part of the city's share, you still would not completely offset your \$55 million deficit. So what was your solution? You took the money from the Towns over a 3 year period, which had little impact on the cash deficit because you were already getting most of the money. Then several of the Towns to be spiteful took all the money they could get as cash, further compounding the problem. You then gave some money back to the Villages, the

schools and the city which they will receive through the end of the agreement, and are dollars you could have used to offset your problem. Then you changed the distribution from population to ad valorem, even further compounding the problem. The results are astronomical increases in county tax rates in the towns. Did you have a clue that this would be the result ? Now to get out of this mess that you have created, you are using one shots, revenue pumps and raiding fund balance. How do you plan on dealing with that self created mess when you do the 2012 budget a year from now?

Thank you for your time. I do not thank you for reducing my tax rate increase from 74% to 30% because it is still too high, and I do not thank the Town of Lysander Board for taking the million dollars plus of sales tax in cash which is part of the reason behind 30% increase. I guess the good news is that they and the other towns doing the same thing, are not only showing their greed but demonstrating why the County perhaps should not have shared sales tax with them at all.

Donald F. Colon
Baldwinsville, NY 13027

Donna Lenkin

TO: The Onondaga County Legislature Members

REGARDING: The Privatization of Medical Services in the Correctional Facilities of Onondaga County Correctional Facility, Onondaga County Justice Center, and Hillbrook Detention Facility

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like an opportunity to air my concerns and views of the proposals for the privatization of medical services in the correctional facilities in Onondaga County. I am a RN working full time in the Justice Center. There are several staff that have five years and greater with the county. We have been working fully staffed until the reports of the probability of a private company taking over the medical and mental health care, and the early retirement incentives. Currently there is difficulty in replacing staff who have retired due to the uncertainty of the DOH in corrections. During this period, we were also told that our medical director would be leaving the end of August. We attempted to rally the unions to get advice and answers. There has been little discussion and clarity to the sudden bail out of the DOH from correctional health. Why we would not attempt to fix the few problems instead of throwing it away for the potential of documented disasters? The following remarks are issues obscuring the clarity of this situation:

1. Why are we not asking doctors from the Syracuse area to enter into Correctional Health? There are doctors at the jail and prison, who have not been formally asked to consider the appointment of Medical Director, and if asked stated they would consider the position. We have already spoken to such doctors and have received answers to suggest that we will have an active Medical Director if approached. I would like to add that the residency programs have worked well towards the development and growth of the program as well as facilitate the needs at the Correctional Health Facilities.

2. There are cost effective measures that can be outlined that would decrease medication cost, hospital cost, overtime cost, and improvement of care. Such measures would include the modification of policies, additions of procedures, additional training, change in staffing patterns, utilizing the skills and abilities of the staff, additional protocols, utilizing drug reps in the community, and much more.

3. Why are we supporting the idea of giving Onondaga County monies to a company that will profit from our county? These private companies care little about Syracuse and its people. They have no interest in our public health concerns. The private companies deliver substandard care that has exacerbated public health concerns in the greater community. Their only dedication is to the shareholders for the company. Those monies will not surface back into Onondaga County as they are not from this state. If you were to cross match many of the inmates, you will find that they were also care for by the DOH. These are our people. Their health would be greater compromised if not taken care of in the jail, costing tax payers even more monies to treat even worse conditions. How can you allow another corporation for profit to make money on our county when we have the ability to do it better?

4. Why would we give the control to outsiders while bearing the liabilities? We need to keep the control of the correctional system within our own county. The inmates are in custody of the county. We should not give up the control of what happens to our people. When inmates are released into the community, it is difficult to track and continue care, putting a huge burden back on the DOH and community. Untreatable hypertension in the jail may lead to stroke out in the community, thereby increasing the medical cost to the county and its people.

5. Many lawsuits surround the incompetence and unjust care of the private companies. Federal court records show CMC has been sued 40 times in the past 8 years. During the past decade the family that now manages medical care for Monroe County jails has been entangled in lawsuits with claims ranging from significant misappropriation of company funds to unusual contentions that marital infidelity led to a private investigator bugging their house. The Montgomery County district attorney investigated a contract extension to CMC in which there were accusations that a county official received something in exchange for recommending that the county continue with CMC. Repeated failures as identified by investigators in New York facilities, such as: understaffed medical teams, nurses doing tasks beyond their training, prescription drugs withheld, doctors out of reach, patient records unread, employee misconduct unpunished, doctors under-qualified. The Commission on Corrections in New York State condemned PHS for company's refusal to admit and address deadly mistakes. 15 times in the past 4 years the state has disciplined PHS nurses and doctors. Doctors on site are over ruled by a supervising doctor in DC by phone. Inmates have died in CMS run prisons. There have been more than 20 cases in which inmates allegedly died as a result of negligence, indifference, understaffing, inadequate training or overzealous cost-cutting. Medical care was so grossly inadequate that one department of corrections fined CMS nearly one million dollars. During an audit with CMS, the records showed that CMS failed to provide medications to inmates during the required period 46% of the time.

6. While it is true that some 9 correctional facilities have elected to give privatizing a chance, the other 94% of the New York jails and prisons are taking care of their own as it should be. There are approximately 135 facilities in NYS and only 9 have given the control up to private sectors such as PHS, CMS, and CMC. If you look at Rikers Island, for example, PHS is giving substandard care and is blamed for many deaths and incidents. It is difficult to collect on the lawsuits involving private companies. They don't cooperate; they are noncompliant, and very evasive. Paperwork is reported as unfortunately not reaching its intended destination. Who wants to deal with that?

7. The dental and optical services worked well. Dental pulled out when negotiations for a contract were not attainable per discussions. The dentist was very willing to continue and stated that he hoped it would work out. He stated he enjoyed working at the Correctional Facilities in Onondaga County. He moved his family from the state of Virginia to Liverpool, New York, where he planned a long career at Onondaga Corrections.

8. The inmates are in custody and are the property of the county. Onondaga County is in fact liable, and is subject to law suits and defense. This is non disputable. The bottom line is that all parties involved will be sued once determined any wrong doing. Our credibility and financial stability will once again be on the line. Under a private company, Onondaga County would have no control to have done anything different to have caused a better outcome.

9. How can the county justify raising property taxes almost 100% while allowing a corporation to come in and make a profit from a job that we are able to do, have been doing, and with guarantee, do it better? Property taxes in the suburbs are increasing to close the huge budget deficit. It is said that there needs to be cuts anywhere possible. Why is this even up for discussion without exhausting the obvious alternatives first?

10. The Psych doctors and staff are not bailing out. They will be here to stay, according to the Mental Health staff and a few doctors who have spoken up in disbelief that this is an actual possibility. The Mental Health employees are very dedicated to the inmate population. There is a loyalty that runs deep, as they are part of Onondaga County and want to utilize every resource to help its own people.

In conclusion, we respectfully request the Legislature to explore changes within the confines of the county. Formally seek doctors in the community, and allow our nursing director and medical director to work out more effective plans for operation, to include cost effective measures and healthy care. Please do not consider privatizing. It would be a huge mistake to allow a for profit agency to insult and violate this county and its good people. Onondaga County Correctional facilities are accredited and uphold the highest standards. We care about our community, and the inmates are our community. We acknowledge that there are more challenges that face Correctional Health as our community is faced with unemployment, lack of medical insurance, increase crimes, poverty, depression, and frustration; to say a few. The fact is that we are professional and caring individuals, and best suited to resolve the problems of our own people. The DOH should dictate and control the care plans. We utilize the information and response to treatments to plan for continuance out in the community. Keeping people informed and healthy in the community alleviates the strain in the ER's, clinics, doctor's offices, and schools. The exacerbation of a disease process is managed and controlled, and in many cases avoided. In the end, it is in the best interest of Onondaga County; humanely and financially.

We, the employees of the DOH, working at OCCF and the Justice Center would be able to meet with any of the Legislatures to discuss any concerns, speak of more details, and answer questions. We thank-you for your time.

Respectfully Submitted, Donna Conklin, RN

1. another facility/corporation making a profit off of Onondaga County
2. no other measures attempted
3. Onondaga County can not afford to spend monies at this time when there are other options
4. other doctors willing to take on the responsibility
5. able to keep the control within the county
6. can actually cost more in community time, money, management
7. Onondaga County still bears liability
8. unable to monitor medical problems of the inmates once released
9. potential for disaster r/t poor communication, neglect, misguided direction, lack of genuine care for the residents of Onondaga County
10. monies given to another company for profit will never resurface back into our County
11. As per Casey Jordan , a dollar saved is a dollar that could be used for another project
12. Onondaga County would be remiss to not attempt to utilize other options of our own institution before throwing in the towel, spend more monies that would harm our community
13. we can cut cost and still make attractive offers to staff for recruitment.
14. we are still in contract until 12/2012, and its binding

Good Evening,

I would like to start by thanking all of our EMS, Fire and Law Enforcement personnel and their families and supporters for their continued dedication, sacrifices and services that they perform daily to keep my family, friends, neighbors and community safe. As a member of the Onondaga County public safety community you wake up not knowing what is going to happen throughout the day. What you do know is that the unthinkable and unexpected happen every day.

It boils down to bad things happen to people from every part of our society. You don't think that misfortune or tragedy will occur or how it will directly affect you or your family and if they will be ok when it does happen. I am not only talking about the physical factors that affect us as responders, I am also talking about the mental factors that are also part of the job. As an EMS provider, I can only give examples of performing CPR on a newborn baby recently brought home by its parents and having them look at you hoping and praying everything is going to be ok. It is even more difficult if you yourself have recently brought your first child home, you can well imagine what would you do if you were in their situation.

After the call you continuously review in your mind of what you could have done better, what other resources could have been available that could have potentially made a difference, like newer equipment, medications and if you could have gotten the patient to the hospital quicker or if other personnel could have been there that could have offered assistance or higher medical expertise. You discuss the call over and over with your partner trying to convince yourself that you did everything possible.

This is no different when you're working on a fellow public servant who was doing their job protecting, helping and serving our community, a victim to those "bad things that happen". It could be a police officer shot during a routine traffic stop or a drug bust gone horribly wrong or a Firefighter trapped in a burning building trying to save the person who did not get out in time or the EMS crew that is transporting a critical patient to the hospital when a car crashes into the ambulance.

I mention these incidents as they have already occurred to our local public safety personnel and not to complain about the job or the responsibilities we accepted. We know very well why we do what we do. I assure you it's not all about the money we earn. After all, "how much is a life worth"? Currently, there are over 3,500 volunteers involved in our public safety services in Onondaga County alone. I would believe that number would increase dramatically to over 10,000 if you included all the other volunteers that dedicate their time and efforts to helping others, such as all the hospital volunteers, Veterans associations, Red Cross personnel, Rescue mission, Catholic charities, Community task forces and the list could keep going on and on.

As a community we continue to face hard economic times. We understand that and we understand that we have our responsibility to continue protecting, serving, saving and even preventing incidents in Onondaga County as that is our role as being public safety servants or providers.

My questions to the County Legislators are these:

1. If it is our public safety agencies duties and responsibilities to protect our community, whether through the Fire Service, Law Enforcement or Emergency Medical Services what are your responsibilities? Is it not your responsibility to protect us by providing the resources, manpower and financial backing allowing us to do our jobs as the legislators before you have?

2. What resource does Onondaga County currently provide to all the Public Safety Agencies that solely supports all their missions? The answer is Air 1. I'll explain in more detail shortly.

3. Third and toughest questions is how much is a responder's life worth? How much is the life of even one member of our community, one resident or visitor to our county worth? Based on several different statements or news articles your answers vary. I must note some of you on the legislature have managed to accomplish putting a price tag on a human life between the price of \$500,000 to \$600,000 dollars this upcoming year or if you plan on selling it 1.8 million. Based on my research I have found no judge, jury or other governmental official that has been able to accomplish that feat.

The article in this morning's Post Standard carried remarks attributed to some of the legislators remarking that only 7 out of 24 medical flights that Air 1 made were for Onondaga County residents. We are here today in the county convention center, built to attract conferences and conventions that will bring people from all over the country to our county. Should they be warned that the Onondaga County Legislature doesn't believe they are entitled public safety services while they are here? Will we carry this to the point of not acknowledging crimes committed against non-residents? Should the many colleges we have here in the county include this information in their brochures? Will we check the tax rolls to see if a property is up to date on its taxes before we send fire services to protect the property? Surely, this would save countless tax dollars! I can see from your reactions that you think these remarks are asinine. Perhaps, but no more asinine than some already published in the local newspaper. Please understand that I am not talking about all legislators. The public safety responders of this county know that several of you are committed to doing the RIGHT thing, which isn't necessarily the EASY thing, to help us continue to protect the lives and properties in this county, be they residents or visitors.

There has been a strong focus over the years to attack the Air 1 program and the people who utilize it. Why don't we shift that same energy and focus towards ways to make the program work even better, and ways to reduce the cost of it to the taxpayers?

For those that have supported the program or that are truly "on the fence" about the cost vs. benefits of the Air 1 Program thank you for supporting us. Over the past several months you have been given statistic and financial figures and talked about other agencies that can provide the service that Air 1 offers. I am requesting that these be truly verified PRIOR to your final decision. I am sure these are not all accurate and therefore you do not have a complete and accurate picture to make an informed decision on the entire Air 1 Program. After all how can you, with all the other responsibilities you have. Without that, you cannot fully comprehend the effects that losing this program will have directly on our public safety providers, residents, businesses and visitors to our

County. I urge you to talk with the Fire Chiefs, Police officers, EMT's, Paramedics, Fire police and the other providers that have utilized it directly and ask them why they needed it and what benefits it offered or life depended on it.

Over a month ago, a video was given to you about the Air 1 program to help inform you and the public about the Air 1 program and why it is truly unique. The purpose of this video was to hopefully open the door to more discussions concerning the program and the cost vs. benefits and to utilize representatives of the agencies involved to see if jointly we can find solutions to several of the concerns that were being raised on both sides. This is not simply a line item in a budget. This is a LIFE item in public safety, it directly affects the lives of our personnel, and our families and all those we serve.

Our goal is to make sure you have the facts that include accurate information and supportive data to all County Legislators so they are able to make an informed decision on the future of this vital program. We are currently preparing a document that identifies factors to be included in delineating measurable successes of the Air 1 program. We understand that these are hard economic times and hard decisions must be made. These decisions should not be made in haste or without benefit of full and accurate information. Your decision will directly affect the lives and safety of all our public safety personnel, their families and all those they serve. All the public safety providers have dedicated their lives to protecting, serving and saving lives in our communities and we understand that we also have a duty to be fiscally responsible in providing these services.

One of the most important roles of the Air 1 Program is to protect our Police, Fire and EMS responders as well the public they serve. Per the 2009 Onondaga County 911 Annual Report the Police were dispatched to a total 429,729 calls for service. Fire Services were dispatched to a total of 46,680 calls for service with a total of 123 structure fires. Emergency Medical Services were dispatched to a total of 68,739 for calls for service. The total responses of all the public safety agencies within Onondaga County came to a total of 545,148 calls for service this included data from Rural Metro Medical Services. These are facts. The facts continue with that Air 1 responded to over 1400 calls for service, the NYSP helicopter per information that was foiled from the 911 center responded to only 141 calls in Onondaga County Since 2007.

Currently seeing increased unemployment rates and an increase in emergency calls for services. If you watch the local news you've already noticed the increase in shootings, stabbings, armed robberies, hostage situations, police pursuits, and assaults. We are seeing major traffic accidents, mass casualty incidents, flooding, haz-mat calls as well as several specialty rescues, not to mention the local hospitals going on internal disaster due to overcrowding. It is obvious that this is not the time to reduce our public safety services period, especially one as vital as Air 1. The program has the capability and track record of supporting these multi-disciplinary mission roles that benefits all of Onondaga County Emergency Services, not just the solitary department that carries it in budget, however that benefits us all. Perhaps, its time to create a special line item in the county budget for the Air 1 program.

I would like to establish an outline of the current Air 1 program; it includes current working relationships with government, business and non-profit corporations and is truly unique in its set up. The following agencies have utilized some their resources to support the mission of the Air 1 program: Onondaga County Sheriffs Office, University Hospital, Upstate Emergency Medicine, Inc. and the Western Area Volunteer Emergency Services, Inc. Each of these agencies plays a key role in the current mission and support of the Air 1 Program. Below, the program is broken down to help you better understand how it actually works and who is responsible for each aspect of the program.

Onondaga County Sheriffs Office:

The Sheriff's Office primary function is law enforcement, it is also charged with the responsibility of providing for the safety of the citizens of Onondaga County. This would include responding to life and death situations including those of a non-criminal nature, consistent with Countywide Emergency Medical Service Protocols. They are responsible for the Aircraft, Maintenance and OCSO Flight team members. The Flight Team members include four deputies; two are current pilots and two are trained observers in the process of training to be pilots. All authority over the helicopter, personnel, safety and operations currently falls under the Chief pilot or pilot in charge of the aircraft.

University Hospital:

University Hospital currently operates the Air Medical Service portion, and holds the CON (certificate of need) required by New York State Department of Health to operate the medical mission of Air 1. They supply the team with all the necessary medical equipment, supplies, medications and specialty medical equipment and Medical Direction. The Trauma Nurse / Helicopter Coordinator is responsible for these aspects and works closely with all team members and the University Trauma team.

Upstate Emergency Medicine Group, Inc.

The Upstate Emergency Medicine Group, Inc. currently provides for funding for the day-to-day medical oversight of the program that includes the medical operations of the flight team. They are responsible for making sure that all New York State Department of Health regulations and certifications are completed and being followed at all times.

Western Area Volunteer Emergency Services, Inc.

The Western Area Volunteer Emergency Services, Inc. is responsible for managing the day-to-day medical operations of the flight team to included daily equipment and supply checks, quality assurance, personnel records, including the medical teams certifications, scheduling, training, safety, orientation of new members, call reviews, documentation of patient care records and oversight of the team's medical personnel.

The "flight team" as we know it works together to support the mission of Air 1 and has been doing so for over 25 years. In the event Air-One is requested to respond to two different type incidents at the same time, the flight crew makes the response decision, based on the seriousness of each call and all other factors known at the time.

Local Air Medical Services Overview

The market in which the Air Medical Services program is operating can be characterized by the following two categories:

Public:

- Onondaga County Sheriffs Office Air 1 located at the Sheriffs Heliport in Warners, NY. 1400+ calls in Onondaga County, Police, Fire and EMS
- New York State Police Helicopter 1H16 located at Executive Air at Hancock Airport. A total of 141 calls in Onondaga County since 2007. Supporting Police and EMS

Private:

- Mercy Flight Central located in Marcellus & Canandaigua NY EMS only, 166 calls for service per AMS Clearing house report. This we know not be be accurate as they continued over last year not to participate in the helicopter clearings based on their continued lawsuits against Onondaga County.
- Life Flight located in Pennsylvania. (This program is not included in our region and does not represent total AMS transports in the region) EMS only

Helicopter Services Analysis

The following is an overview of the other Air Services in the area:

New York State Police (Syracuse)

Business Type:

- State Government

Missions:

- Staffed medical rotor-wing transport (helicopter), all non-medical missions puts the helicopter out of service for medical missions from time of call until time of return to hangar. No fire suppression capabilities

Staffing:

- Crew staffed 16 hours, 0700-2300
- Crew needs to call in police observers for police missions
- Crew needs to call-in personnel for limited rescue and insertion mission
- Crew can be dispatched anywhere in NYS for extended periods of time limiting availability in CNY
- Staffed for non-police searches

Equipment:

- Forward Looking InfraRed (FLIR)
- Hoist
- Spot light

Revenues:

- Funded by tax payers
- Air Medical Services Supported by the North Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps, which bills patient for medical services only, not transport.

Location:

Hancock Airport (unless deployed elsewhere in the state)

Geographical area served:

- All of New York State

Competitor's key strengths:

- State funded

Key weaknesses:

- No combination of support services, no physician response, inability to communicate directly with ground crews, have already established they would not be entering the Onondaga County Interoperable Radio System in the near future. No plan for dual provider medical coverage or advanced (RSI) airway management.

The following companies are our indirect competitors:

Mercy Flight Central (Marcellus)

Business Type:

- Non profit contracted with for profit business

Missions:

- Staffed medical rotor-wing transport (helicopter), is not a multifunctional aircraft, does not support any other mission except Air Medical Transport, no rescue capabilities, no law enforcement capabilities, No fire suppression capabilities. Does do inter-facility transports from hospital to hospital.

Staffing:

- 24 hour staffing

Equipment:

- Air Medical only

Revenue:

- Air Medical Billing
- Grants
- Donations

Locations

- Rotor-wing – Canandaigua, New York
- Rotor-wing - Marcellus, New York

Services offered:

- Air Medical Services only, no police or fire mission capabilities
- Revenues:
- Billing for services
- Donations
- Grants

Geographical areas served:

- Central New York and Rochester Area

Competitor's key strengths:

- 24 hour staffing
- Donations & Grants
- Critical Care transport staff with RN

Key weaknesses:

- Air Medical Services only

- No direct radio communications with any ground crews in Onondaga County – not part of the OCICS system, no police missions, no fire missions, not necessarily in Marcellus or Canandaigua when in service.

Life-Net (Pennsylvania)

Business Type:

- Non profit contracted with for profit business

Missions:

- Staffed medical rotor-wing transport (helicopter), is not a multifunctional aircraft, does not support any other mission except Air Medical Transport, no rescue capabilities, no law enforcement capabilities, No fire suppression capabilities. Does do inter-facility transports from hospital to hospital.

Staffing:

- 24 hour staffing

Equipment:

- Air Medical only

Revenue:

- Air Medical Billing
- Contracts
- Grants
- Donations

Locations

- Rotor-wing (helicopter) Pennsylvania

Services offered:

- Air Medical Services only, no police or fire mission capabilities

Geographical areas served:

- Northern Pennsylvania & Southern New York

Competitor's key strengths:

- 24 hour staffing

- Donations & Grants
- Critical Care transport staff with RN

Key weaknesses:

- Air Medical Services only
- No working knowledge of the geography/topography of Onondaga County, no training with any agencies located within Onondaga County, inability to communicate directly with any ground crews, no police missions, no fire suppression, long response times based on location.

As the Deputy County Executive, my responsibilities include the exercise of general administrative responsibility on behalf of the County Executive over all financial and administrative units of the County government.

In this capacity, I would like to share the County Executive's major concerns with the amendments to the 2011 Tentative Annual Operating Budget as contained in the Ways and Means Report filed with the Clerk of the Legislature on September 30.

- 1) The County Executive's first major concern is what these changes will do to future County budgets, beginning with the 2012 Budget. County CFO Jim Rowley has initiated an effort to incorporate multi-year budgeting practices into the County's business processes. Even if the County Legislature decides to adopt the County Executive's recommended 2011 Budget without modifications, we will be facing a difficult – but manageable – budget next Fall. We would be looking at a budget gap of between \$10 and \$20 million dollars if the recommended budget is adopted without modification. If this Legislature adopts the Ways and Means amendments, the 2012 Budget gap will increase by nearly \$40 million.
- 2) Her second major concern is what the amendments will do to the balance of our General Fund. The result of appropriating \$12 million in Fund Balance and also committing the County to paying cash for the Early Retirement Incentive payment that is due in February 2012 will be a net reduction in Fund Balance of \$18.6 million. That is a huge number by any measure. And it's very easy to see how our Fund Balance could decline by more than \$20 million by the end of 2011 because all other reserves will be fully depleted by then and there are many "cuts" in the Ways & Means report that may not materialize or be sustainable over time.

If this Legislature can combine the recurring cuts that you have made to the County Executive's recommended budget with a reduced reliance on changes to appropriations or revenues that are not sustainable in the 2012 budget and budgets beyond, then the taxpayers of Onondaga County will be well served. You will also be making an important contribution to the discussion about how the various municipalities and school districts in our County can look at their budgets and ours as part of a single Balance Sheet. As the County Executive has said on many occasions, we must look at the total property taxes paid by the citizens of our county when making decisions about our own budget. We have already seen how the decision to adopt a new 10-year sales tax sharing agreement has led to significant changes in the willingness to talk about consolidation and shared services among local governments. The budget you adopt next week will be equally influential, one way or the other.

Good Evening, Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

My name is Holly Sammons and I am the CSEA representative to the libraries, I am a librarian at the Central Library and in charge of the Local History and Genealogy Department. Tonight I'm hearing wearing all of those hats.

Before the early retirement incentive began the libraries – which consist of the Central Library and 8 branch libraries had a roster of about 102 full time employees. Six staff took advantage of the ERI. Now as we go into 2011 we are looking at a budget that will eliminate 8 full time positions. The library is looking at a 10% reduction in staff, which includes layoffs. This doesn't include the 3 titles we lost in the 2010 budget.

In times of economic downturn it is a well known fact that people turn more libraries, for job seeking, for access to technology they cannot afford, and for basic literacy needs to name a few demands we see on a daily basis. We cannot continue to provide these services to the public with a 10% slash in staffing.

These past two years have not been the total of cutbacks and belt tightening at the libraries. In my 12 years at the Central Library I have seen demand for library services from the residents of Onondaga County increase, while staff is cut, and budgets diminish.

As union rep I have repeatedly expressed safety concerns at the Central Library where often a skeletal crew of staff is asked to meet the demands of the public. Safety is just one of the many issues affected by diminishing staff. We've also seen promotional positions eliminated, denying many long term employees the opportunity for advancement. We deny no one service, we welcome any and all to use our libraries. And yet we think nothing of denying our staff the right to work in a safe productive environment. An organization cannot continue year after year to ask more and more of its workers and continue to take more and more away from them while doing so.

While we may not think of libraries as essential in comparison to police and firefighters, libraries are a cornerstone of democracy. It speaks to the quality of each of our lives; without libraries what would our community be?

I respectfully urge the county legislature to restore the staffing levels at the libraries to at least the numbers that we started with this year.



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Daniel Gewanter
#381

October 7, 2010

Joanie Mahoney, County Executive
Ann Rooney, Deputy County Executive for Human Services
Gordon Cuffy, County Attorney
421 Montgomery Street
Syracuse, New York 13202

Members of the Onondaga County Legislature
401 Montgomery Street
Syracuse, New York 13202

Dear Ms. Mahoney, Ms. Rooney, Mr. Cuffy, and the Members of the Legislature,

On behalf of the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU), the Syracuse/Onondaga County branch of the NAACP, Disabled in Action of Greater Syracuse (DIA), and the Syracuse Council of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), we write to express grave concerns about the adequacy of medical care at the Onondaga Justice Center, and to request that the County enact comprehensive and effective measures to protect the constitutional rights of the detainees in the Justice Center, as well as in Jamesville Penitentiary and Hillbrook Detention Center. As you know, we have been receiving complaints and monitoring conditions in the Justice Center, especially with regard to medical care. In the past year, however, with a series of deaths and a marked increase in both the quantity and severity of complaints, our concerns have grown substantially.

The proposal to privatize medical and mental health care services at the Justice Center, Jamesville Penitentiary, and Hillbrook Detention Center should not be seen as a substitute for more fundamental action to correct current deficiencies in the delivery and oversight of the medical and mental health care in these facilities. On the contrary, the present situation calls for strengthening involvement of the County Department of Health and other relevant County officials in ensuring compliance with minimum constitutional standards, as well as the institutionalization of an independent oversight function that allows for the participation of representatives of key community organizations and constituencies. Moreover, we are concerned that simply transferring responsibility for this care into new hands will not address the conditions, policies or practices that are the underlying cause of the problems we see today. Indeed, without a more thorough examination of what has actually caused these problems and a serious attempt to address them, we are concerned that the intended privatization of medical care services will only perpetuate current problems.

I. A WORRISOME PICTURE OF MEDICAL CARE WITHIN THE JUSTICE CENTER

The seriousness of the problems with medical care services at the Onondaga Justice Center is illustrated most starkly by three recent deaths at the facility. The deaths of Chuniece Patterson¹, L. Edmond²

¹ Chuniece Patterson passed away on November 12, 2009, due to apparent negligent medical care related to an ectopic pregnancy. See *Syracuse.com*, "Pregnant inmate died after hours of agony in Syracuse jail", May 16, 2010, http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2010/05/pregnant_inmate_died_after_hou.html; See also, *CNYcentral.com*, "Pregnant woman dies in Syracuse jail cell", November 12, 2009, <http://www.cnycentral.com/news/story.aspx?id=376257>

and Raul Pinet³, and the injury suffered by Maeparo Ramadhan, all indicate the **need for a strong assessment of the current medical care policies and practices at the facility before any transition is made to privatized care.** The conclusions drawn in the final report of the New York State Commission of Corrections on the death of Chuniece Patterson speak very strongly to the severity of the problems with the medical care at the jail. The Report states that "...Had Ms. Patterson received adequate and competent medical care, her death would have been prevented..."⁴ Privatization should not be seen as a silver bullet that will automatically provide a solution to the problem. Even if future care is managed by an outside company, the County retains its fundamental legal obligation to ensure that detainees receive constitutionally required medical and mental health care.

It should be stressed that the undersigned organizations frequently receive serious complaints from detainees at the facility, related to, among other things: not receiving required medication; not getting timely and proper attention to serious medical conditions or complaints; failure to take appropriate measures to deal with the potential spread of infections; failure to meet the basic medical needs of people with disabilities; failure to provide appropriate emergency medical response; and disdainful and dismissive treatment of detainees who present medical-related complaints.

Many of these cases have never been profiled in the newspaper and so have not as readily stirred public opinion, yet they are no less deserving of attention. As described in a recent letter to the editor signed by ten community organizations and published in the Post-Standard, there have also been cases in the past few years of nurses refusing to dispense prescribed medications, of nurses and deputies who ignored or dismissed inmates repeated complaints of pain and illness, of medical staff refusing to provide a wheelchair to an inmate with a severe mobility impairment, and of a nurse instructing deputies to let a severely disabled inmate "suffer."

II. THE PROPOSAL TO PRIVATIZE MEDICAL CARE IN THE JAIL RAISES SERIOUS CONCERNS

As detailed below, based on what is known about the process to date and the Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by Onondaga County regarding the proposed privatization of medical services, we are concerned that there are not sufficient assurances that appropriate medical care services will indeed be provided at the facility and that adequate oversight will be thoroughly guaranteed. The particular problems we have identified, as well as suggestions for responses to these problems, are outlined in detail below.

- **A LACK OF TRANSPARENCY**

In July of this year, the County began to seek private vendors to provide medical and mental health care services in all three correctional facilities. After learning about this, we became concerned about how this privatization would affect the above mentioned problems. In an attempt to add transparency to the process, the NYCLU made a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request for the bids received by the County in response to its Request for Proposals (RFP). The County denied the NYCLU's request, claiming that making the bids public would result in an unfair competitive advantage. Since then, the county has moved rapidly forward to consider these bids and move towards selecting a vendor, and is now engaging in

² L. Edmond died on June 18, 2010, apparently due to MRSA infection. See, *Syracuse.com*, "Onondaga County jail inmate dies in hospital", June 18, 2010, http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2010/06/onondaga_county_jail_inmate_di.html

³ Raul Pinet died on August 6, 2010. See, *Syracuse.com*, "Syracuse man dies after losing consciousness at Justice Center booking section", August 7, 2010, http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2010/08/syracuse_man_dies_after_losing.html Also see, *CNYcentral.com*, "Father speaks out about death of son", August 7, 2010, <http://www.cnycentral.com/news/story.aspx?id=493715>

⁴ New York State Commission of Corrections, Final Report in the matter of the death of Chuniece Patterson, an inmate of Onondaga Justice Center, June 18th 2010, Findings, 1).

negotiations with that vendor behind closed doors, even as County officials presented next year's budget proposals to the legislature with no specific information about how future care would be delivered. We are concerned about this lack of transparency, and **urge the County to subject the process to greater openness and public input**. Considering the public interest at stake, if the privatization is indeed to occur, it is essential for the County to not only to allow but also to promote public monitoring of and input into the provisions of the contract to be signed. The obligations assumed under such a contract need to be transparently debated and construed.

Moreover, once the County has selected a vendor, there is no longer an issue with competitive advantage. Given the lack of clarity in the obligations of the vendor described in the RFP (as described in more detail below) and the flexibility offered to vendors who wish to propose alternative methods of meeting particular obligations, **it is crucial that the process of reaching a contractual agreement provide the highest level of public confidence in the contractual obligations required by the county. This cannot occur behind closed doors. The County should make its initial draft contract for this vendor public, and solicit input from legislators and the public about its provisions. County Legislators and the public should then be provided with an additional opportunity for input before the contract is finalized.** Without this dimension of transparency and opportunity for legislator and public input, it may seem as if the county is simply passing on its obligation to ensure the adequacy and quality of services at the three correctional facilities where Onondaga residents and other are held by its justice apparatus.

- **THE LACK OF A CLEAR DIAGNOSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION**

In addition, the reasons included in the RFP⁵ to justify seeking a private contractor to provide the correctional medical and mental health services that the County Department of Health currently ensures, when contrasted with the gravity of the recent incidents that reached public attention, seem to indicate the lack of a complete and accurate understanding of the present problems. The RFP states only that "the County has had chronic difficulty in *maintaining pace* due to staff turnover in nursing and other positions." (italics added). There is no mention of the recent deaths or the serious problems we detail above. Accordingly, we **urge the County to immediately commence a broader analysis to thoroughly document and assess current issues with the delivery of medical and mental health care in the Justice Center, in order to guarantee detainees, their families and the community as a whole that proper measures will be adopted so that tragic incidents will not recur.**

The legitimacy of such an evaluation would only be secured if the assessment mechanism to be set up looks not only at quantitative measures but properly attends to the concerns of current inmates and their families by giving them opportunity to participate in the process. For that purpose, **the Onondaga County Commission of Human Rights, the undersigned organizations, and other local human and civil rights organizations with an interest in the matter should have a formal role to play in the design and implementation of the evaluation plan.**

The results of such analysis will provide the County Executive and Legislators with a thorough and updated report of the situation that will represent a suitable baseline for comparison with the services that may be provided in future either by the private sector - if the privatization process indeed moves forward - or if the County chooses to continue to provide nursing care using County employees as it does now. Otherwise, the County will be unable to assess whether the quality and adequacy of medical and mental health services has improved, declined, or remained at similar levels.

⁵ See RFP, point 7.1, "Scope of Service. Overview of the organization". There the RFP states "...the County currently provides healthcare and mental health services at these facilities. *Unfortunately, the County has had chronic difficulty in maintaining pace due to staff turnover in nursing and other positions. As such, the County is now looking to the private sector to provide its correctional health and mental health services*" (Emphasis added)

On one matter in particular, however, the proper course of action is already clear: in order to assure that the circumstances that caused the death of Ms. Chuniece Patterson will not be repeated, it is essential for the County to immediately develop and implement the policies recommended in the New York State Commission of Corrections' final report on the case. Thus, **the obligation to implement these recommendations should be clearly stated within the stated contractual obligations of the vendor, and adequate monitoring policies should be devised.**

- **COUNTY RESPONSIBILITIES AND MECHANISMS FOR OVERSIGHT NEED FURTHER PRECISION**

The RFP contains several references to the process by which the County will monitor the provision of medical care services that demand further clarification and precision, especially considering the fundamental rights of the inmates at stake. Provisions like those contained in paragraphs 7.2.1.6 (on "Periodical Health Appraisals"), 7.2.5.6 (on "quality assurances"), 7.2.7.5/6 (on "statistical data collection"), 7.2.7.10 (on the review by the contractor of "administrative and operational policies and procedures"), 7.2.7.1.2/1 (on "risk management and mortality review"), 7.2.7.1.4 (on "Safety and sanitation" inspections), 7.2.7.1.5 (on the formulation by contractor of a "Cost Containment Program") and 7.2.7.1.9 (on the review of the medical director) do not state the precise monitoring and reporting duties that the contractor will be expected to perform or the policies they will be expected to formulate in order to facilitate this. **These obligations should be reformulated in a much clearer manner in order to ensure that the County is meeting its legal obligations to ensure the provision of adequate medical care in the jail.**

In particular, the RFP establishes that "the county shall employ a contract monitor to monitor the health care contract (...) The contract monitor shall determine in the county's behalf whether or not the county is and has been receiving the staffing and services indicated in the contract and the offeror's response to the RFP. The contract monitor has the right to (...) call other individuals or organizations to assist him or her in the evaluation of the medical and mental health services..."⁶ But the RFP states neither the qualifications that a person should demonstrate in order to be appointed as "Contract monitor", nor any procedure that will be conducted for his or her selection. **The tragic events above mentioned demand that this position should be selected with the utmost care and professionalism.**

Moreover, considering that the contract will cover the provision of medical services of three facilities – which according to the RFP detain a daily average of more than 1,000 inmates - it seems utterly impossible for one individual to efficiently monitor the adequacy and quality of both medical and mental health care services. **It is essential to devise well-equipped and transparent monitoring mechanisms that will allow a ongoing and comprehensive review of the medical and mental health care provided to inmates. This cannot be accomplished in three facilities by one person alone.**

In this context it is important to note that in a recent newspaper interview, the County Health Commissioner affirmed that since the Justice Department Investigation of the Justice Center in the mid- 1990s, the jail has had in place a *"quality assurance committee that regularly monitors and reviews medical treatment."*⁷ However, the actual work of such a body is unclear, as we have not even heard of the existence of such Committee or been aware of how we could observe or provide input into its official deliberations, or examine its official reports. Recent attempts to contact county officials to inquire as to the composition and location of such a committee were fruitless, and indeed revealed that some county officials were not even aware of its existence. This highlights the need for clearly established lines of responsibility for monitoring medical care in the jail.

⁶ RFP, 7.2.7.1.7.

⁷ See Syracuse Post-Standard, "Refugee who fled war in Africa finds injury in a Syracuse jail", June 7th, 2010, http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2010/06/refugee_who_fled_war_in_africa.html

- **THE NECESSITY AND BENEFITS OF AN INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT MECHANISM**

The fact that the RFP expressly establishes that the Contract Monitor will have the right to work with “other individuals or organizations” sets the framework for institutionalizing independent oversight over these facilities.

Notwithstanding the strong necessity for the Contract Monitor’s mechanism to consist of a multidisciplinary team of skilled and experience professionals hired for that job by the County (and not a sole individual), it is clear that given the magnitude of the work involved to review the provision of health care services of a population of over a 1000 detainees will entail, the **input of an independent oversight body composed of organizational and community representatives could be invaluable.** It is already clear that inmates and their families often come to organizations such as the signatories to this letter with complaints about medical and mental health care in the Justice Center. In several recent cases, this has been the only mechanism through which the current Director of Nursing has learned of issues relating to medication, acute medical needs, unaddressed or unclear mental health situations, and failures of medical staff to respond appropriately to inmate conditions and complaints. Institutionalizing a similar feedback mechanism could only assist the Contract Monitor in an already difficult job. Our proposal is to institutionalize this kind of communication in order to make it more effective.

In the context of a larger concern about the County’s ability to ensure transparency and accountability for the management of custody staff and operations in the Justice Center and the concurrent liability of the County for the decisions of an elected Sheriff in charge of all three facilities, an independent body with a role in oversight of these correctional facilities overall would be a good step. Until and unless the County can exert an effective influence over the management decisions of the Sheriff in regards to the operations of the Custody Division, the County will be unable to ensure that its liability for misconduct and neglect are reduced. If the County could impose an obligation on the Custody Division to work with an independent oversight body, perhaps there would eventually be increased accountability for and more public confidence in the management of the Jail.

For any such independent oversight body to have meaningful input on the situation however, provisions should be made to institutionalize the work of this body and to grant the designated members of this independent body proper access to the facilities. Otherwise, no independent oversight could be considered as actually taking place.

We respectfully request a meeting to discuss the proposals outlined herein. Please contact us at your earliest convenience. If we do not hear from you, we will follow up shortly.

Sincerely,



Barrie Gewanter
Director, CNY Chapter NYCLU

On Behalf of:

The New York Civil Liberties Union – NY State Affiliate of the ACLU
Preston Fagan, President – Syracuse/Onondaga County Branch of the NAACP
Luz Encarnacion, President – League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC-Syracuse)
Sally Johnston, President – Disabled in Action (DIA) of Greater Syracuse

Legislators acknowledge that this **will not** produce any cost savings to the County. The County **will not** evade its liability for lawsuits for injuries and deaths related to deficiencies in care. And the records of the few companies that provide these services in other areas raise very serious questions about the quality of care they provide. A few google searches reveal that several of these companies are reported to have had inadequate staffing as well as nurses and doctors doing work they are not qualified to do, to delay and deny prescription medications, to not keep accurate or complete medical records, to ignore or dismiss acute medical needs, and to face numerous lawsuits related to preventable injuries and deaths. It doesn't matter if a company specializes in providing correctional care, if they do it badly.

I'd much rather we worked with people from Onondaga County to fix the problems we face in caring for the people detained in Onondaga County. If we need to contract for new doctors to oversee the care, fine, but don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. If anyone bothered to ask the doctors who are working in the jail right now, you might find that one or more of them might be interested in serving as the facility's medical director.

I have been told that they were never asked.

The budget being forwarded by the Ways and Means Committee anticipates the proposed transition to privatized care midway through the next calendar year. If that is what does happen, then I strongly request that you ensure the following, as laid out in this letter from my organization, the NAACP, Disabled in Action, and the League of United Latin American Citizens or LULAC:

- 1) Conduct a searching and thorough assessment of the quality of care being provided under the current system, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative measures to establish a baseline for comparison after a new system is established. This should include an honest assessment of current problems with the provision of medical and mental health care.
- 2) Right now, county administrators are negotiating a contract with a vendor they have selected. But there has been NO transparency in this process, not for the public or for most legislators. It is crucial that the county identify and explain its choice, and provide opportunities for the public to seek information and gain some degree of confidence in the transition. This cannot occur behind closed doors. The County should also make public its initial draft contract for the selected vendor, and solicit input from legislators and the public before the contract is finalized.
- 3) County Administrators currently intend to retain *only one* Dept of Health employee to oversee contractual obligations in the provision of medical and mental health care to an average daily population of over 1000 detainees in three facilities. This would be an impossible task for one person. The "Contract Monitor" function requires a multidisciplinary team of experienced professionals to ensure that the contractor is fully meeting its obligation to the detainees and to the County.
- 4) The RFP expressly states that the Contract Monitor will have the right to work with "other individuals or organizations." This sets a framework for establishing and institutionalizing a new and independent oversight body composed of organizational and community representatives, perhaps not only in relation to medical and mental health care, but also to inform and improve the management of the County's detention facilities, especially the Justice Center. It is not enough that an organization is allowed to enter the jail to listen to the inmates concerns. *We need the County to institutionalize a feedback mechanism that will inform and motivate change.*

Barrie Gewanter

Director – Central New York Chapter of the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU)
State Affiliate of the ACLU

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Statement of Barrie Gewanter to the Onondaga County Legislature – Oct. 7, 2010

My name is Barrie Gewanter and I represent the New York Civil Liberties Union. I come before you today to speak about the management of the Justice Center jail, and the proposal to privatize the medical and mental health care provided to inmates in the Justice Center, Jamesville and Hillbrook.

As a local human rights advocate, I receive many calls and letters from inmates in the Justice Center and from their family members. From time to time I also hear from people who work in the jail. In the past 2-3 years the number and seriousness of the jail-related concerns brought to my attention has increased. These include experiences of dismissive and demeaning treatment by guards and medical staff, unnecessary use of force, selective use of restrictions and punishments as well as blatant use of racial and homophobic epithets by guards. A culture seems to have been allowed to fester in the jail so that such clearly inappropriate conduct is tolerated or simply ignored. There seems to be little or no accountability for such misconduct. This needs to change.

There are deputies and medical staff who work in this challenging environment, yet still retain their professionalism, composure and compassion, who try to respect the dignity and ensure the wellbeing of each incarcerated person and follow the procedures and policies designed to keep everyone safe. I want to recognize and praise these individuals. But at the same time, I need to call for better management of this facility, so that each inmate is treated fairly and humanely. No one should suffer pain, injury, or death in this jail because a deputy or group of deputies decided to bypass procedure, as seems to have occurred in the death of Raul Pinet. And it must be made crystal clear, at every level from Captain and Lieutenant to Sergeant and Deputy that racism, homophobia, unnecessary and excessive use of force, and other demeaning treatment will not be tolerated in any location in the jail.

I have been most disturbed, however, by the complaints I have received and followed up on related to the medical care in the jail. A few examples include:

- Inmates denied essential prescribed medications
- Unconscionable delays in emergency medical response & medical attention for acute injuries
- Inmates with severe mobility impairments denied the use of assistive devices
- Failure to provide the minimal standard of care to severely disabled inmates
- Failure to properly address a wound that involved a drug resistant and infectious bacteria

We are all aware of the tragic and preventable death of Chuneice Patterson as the result of an ectopic pregnancy. The Commission on Corrections found that had Chuneice “received adequate and competent medical care, her death would have been prevented.” The answer here is again, better management within the facility. And while the Commissioner of Health seems ready and willing to simply walk away from her oversight and management role in correctional health, the real solution is to take a hard look at what needs fixing, rather than to turn away.

There is a qualified and committed professional who became the Director of Nursing only months ago, a public health nurse who seems to have the drive and the will to fix the problems. Yet instead of giving her the support and the authority to do so, the county is moving to eliminate 60 county nursing, mental health and medical support jobs, in order to hand over the responsibility for providing medical and mental health care to a for-profit company – a company with no ties to Onondaga County, that will end up making a profit from Onondaga County, as a result of its decisions about the medical care of Onondaga County residents.

Legislators acknowledge that this **will not** produce any cost savings to the County. The County **will not** evade its liability for lawsuits for injuries and deaths related to deficiencies in care. And the records of the few companies that provide these services in other areas raise very serious questions about the quality of care they provide. A few google searches reveal that several of these companies are reported to have had inadequate staffing as well as nurses and doctors doing work they are not qualified to do, to delay and deny prescription medications, to not keep accurate or complete medical records, to ignore or dismiss acute medical needs, and to face numerous lawsuits related to preventable injuries and deaths. It doesn't matter if a company specializes in providing correctional care, if they do it badly.

I'd much rather we worked with people from Onondaga County to fix the problems we face in caring for the people detained in Onondaga County. If we need to contract for new doctors to oversee the care, fine, but don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. If anyone bothered to ask the doctors who are working in the jail right now, you might find that one or more of them might be interested in serving as the facility's medical director.

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The budget being forwarded by the Ways and Means Committee anticipates the proposed transition to privatized care midway through the next calendar year. If that is what does happen, then I strongly request that you ensure the following, as laid out in this letter from my organization, the NAACP, Disabled in Action, and the League of United Latin American Citizens or LULAC:

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- 4) The RFP expressly states that the Contract Monitor will have the right to work with "other individuals or organizations." This sets a framework for establishing and institutionalizing a new and independent oversight body composed of organizational and community representatives, perhaps not only in relation to medical and mental health care, but also to inform and improve the management of the County's detention facilities, especially the Justice Center. It is not enough that an organization is allowed to enter the jail to listen to the inmates concerns. *We need the County to institutionalize a feedback mechanism that will inform and motivate change.*

Barrie Gewanter
Director – Central New York Chapter of the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU)
NY State Affiliate of the ACLU

Tom Law
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ONONDAGA COUNTY GOV'T COUNTY SEAT SYRACUSE, NEW YORK 132XX CC: **BUCKEL-ONGOV 7TH LEG- & MY REP.!**

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Denise DiRienzo
Executive Director
Landmark Theatre
(315) 475-7979, ext. 103
denise@landmarktheatre.org

**The Landmark Theatre
Stagehouse Expansion
October 7, 2010**

Onondaga County

The Stagehouse Expansion at the Syracuse Area Landmark Theatre, turning the Landmark Theatre into the premiere performing arts center in CNY, is vital to ensure the continued operations of the venue. The Landmark Theatre is the last remaining depression-era movie palace in Central New York. Opened in 1928, the Theatre was commissioned by theatre magnate Marcus Loew and designed by noted architect Thomas Lamb, the nation's pre-eminent theatre designer.

Without this renovation the Theatre will close. We are scheduled to begin construction next week. The stage has been closed since May 1, stage goods have been removed and **staff laid off**. We are requisitioning funding sources and have an executed loan commitment letter. One of the conditions of the commitment letter is a contingency appropriation from Onondaga County. Without the County contingency we **will lose our financing and** have to start over and since we are days away from construction start without the ability to generate revenue we cannot afford to begin again. **Shows generally book a year in advance we would before we could get to that point.** Architect, engineers, construction manager and subcontractors have all been hired. Final construction documents have been completed. Asbestos Abatement is sitting on the stage waiting to begin.

We have struggled to make ends meet since the late 1950's. In fact in the mid-1970's Loew's announced the theatre's closing. With demolition threatened, community leaders, city officials and cultural agencies established an *ad hoc* committee to study possible community acquisition. In an effort to protect the theatre and make it eligible for preservation funding and to discourage commercial development by disallowing certain tax incentives, the facility was permanently listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.

The Theatre was built as a movie palace, but in order to remain operational it needs to adapt. The physical size of the stage, both in depth and height, can no longer accommodate larger productions. The Theatres' rigging system, stage floor and overhead beams are all original to the building and pushing 82 years of service.

The Stagehouse Expansion will turn the Landmark Theatre into the premiere performing arts facility in Central New York. Schematic designs exceed the needs of the largest touring Broadway show “The Lion King.” The ability to attract and host these larger touring shows will ensure the solvency of the Landmark Theatre.

Currently we are lit about 100 nights a year. We will be able to double that once renovations are made. Currently the Landmark Theatre has an economic impact of 14 million dollars annually in Onondaga County. 250,000 people come through the doors each year. They park downtown, they eat **down town**, they have a night cap in Armory Square. By doubling the nights we can double the impact and the sales tax and room tax revenue. Throughout the country revitalizing historic theatres such as ours has proven to be an economic catalyst on downtown streets. Armory Square has seen the success of our success. Let’s take that success to the 300 block of Salina Street.

The Landmark Theatre has 50 concerts per year and 10 weddings per year. (the rest of our events are corporate events, fundraisers and children’s plays.) Through the **artist** we book about 480 room nights in Onondaga county. With weddings about 100 room nights annually. By bringing touring Broadway shows in to the county – those nights could potentially triple. Cast sizes are much larger, show stays are longer. This leads to the potential of more room nights and more occupancy tax.

Currently the Theatre operates on a bare bones staff. We have one full time person and 6 part time staff. We currently do a summer layoff for six weeks. Once the Landmark Theatre is up and running as the premiere performing arts center we can expand our staff to the needed levels – 4 to 5 full time staff and 10 part time staff.