Syracuse, New York, on October 7, 2010, 7:00 pm to 10:35 pm.

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Legislature expressed their view that those revenues must be applied to reduction of the real property tax level. This has been the tone the Legislature has taken since their vote on the use of sales tax revenues and during this year's budget and due process.

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

Several weeks ago Chairman Rhinehart, the Joint Leader Lesniak and I met with Deputy County Executive Bill Fisher and Chief Fiscal Officer Jim Rowley to reinforce the Legislature's commitment to avoid an increase in real property taxes. On September 15th the County Executive presented her proposed budget, which decreased the county tax levy by approximately $3 million but did not avoid a substantial increase in taxes in most of the towns in the county.

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

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

Chairman Jordan

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

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

LEGISLATOR BUCKEL: Mr. Chairman, point of order. In your remarks you mentioned the will of the Legislature. There has never been a vote that said it will do. We have not had a vote on that yet. And we are here to deliberate and hear people so that we can make an informed decision. What you just heard is not the will of the Legislature but rather a small group. May we proceed?

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

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

So first is Robert Doucette with the
Doucette

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

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

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

ROBERT DOUCETTE: My name is Robert Doucette, I live in the city of Syracuse at 102 Berkley Drive, and my profession is I'm a real estate developer. I'm here tonight to ask the Legislators to restore all of the monies to the funding of the arts that was originally put in the County Executive's budget. The reasons that I'm about to give, and I have to tell you I feel very passionately about this issue and about the arts. And I know my feelings are shared by many of you.

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

Doucette

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

So you know, for me it's kind of a simple, it's a simple proposition, one that I make every day in my business. You know, how do I get the best return on my dollar? That's one of the things that is so interesting about the arts.

You know we spent $1.28 million in Onondaga County and we create $62 million worth of economic activity. I wish to God I could produce that kind of a return in my real estate business, I really do.

You know, we employ 1,150 people in the arts organizations. But you know, my remarks are brief because they have to be brief, here's my last point and it's less obvious because it's not quantifiable. I don't think there is a person on this Legislature, I bet there is not a person in this room that doesn't recognize the fact that we need more jobs in this county, that we need greater economic activity in this county. I think that for the lawyers in the room we can all stipulate to that.

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

So this is an incredibly important economic development issue. And that's my last point to you, is that we cannot be seen as an area, a region, a city that says we don't care about the arts.

And why do I say that? Even though you know I know many of you say well of course we care about the arts. But you
known that when you look in the papers
and you see the amount we spend and the
amount you're willing to cut it says
something, kind of loud and clear, that
we don't care about the arts. And I
don't believe, could be wrong, but I
don't believe that the constituents
throughout this county. I don't care if
you're in a small town or in one of the
larger towns or in the city of Syracuse,
it's the constituents of this area, your
constituents want to be known as an area
just doesn't care about culture, doesn't
care about the arts, I don't believe
that. And ultimately I do not believe
that upon reflection you are going to be
the kind of Legislators that is going to
say that about our county.

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

CHARLOTTE (CHUCKIE) HOLSTEIN: I'm
Chuckie Holstein, I'm a proud resident
of Onondaga County. I'm the director of
FOCUS Greater Syracuse, and to remind
some of you it's so nice to see so many
of you who participated in FOCUS over
the years. That FOCUS stands for
Forging Our Community's United Strength.
And united we are strong. And I think
just the mere fact that so many citizens
are here tonight represent I believe
something that FOCUS has helped to
foster in our community.

Thank you for allowing me this time.
And I want to tell you why you should
feel proud and I feel proud, my board
feels proud and the citizens feel proud
that we have a citizen engagement
organization in our community. I'm not
speaking now as the executive director
or for the board but I'm really speaking
for the thousands of citizens who have
had access to FOCUS. FOCUS builds

capacity, we build intellectual capital
and we do that by offering opportunity
for individuals and institutions and
community organizations to collaborate
and cooperate. And I know in the 12
years FOCUS has been in existence we've
seen a lot more partnerships,
collaborations and cooperation. We do
it ourselves. And I just have a few
elements to tell you about. But I also
have some interesting quotes that have
come really only in the past couple
weeks.

We had an Asian high school, Asian
immigrant high school student interning
for us one summer, she's now at Syracuse
University. Just the other day she said
to me in an e-mail, she said I want to
thank you for what you and all of FOCUS
do. I'm currently taking a political
science class and I always think of
FOCUS and how FOCUS applied what we
learn in class and real life experiences.
And I think she said it all. I'm very
proud of the fact that this young high
school girl could put it in such
distinct language.

We involve citizens in research,
public policy planning, advocacy, public
education and public outreach. We do
that in a variety of ways. We've done
citizens actions strategic plans, we
have done four of them so far. One on
the arts and culture and my heart bleeds
if the arts and culture gets so cut that
we don't have a quality of life in this
community we all are seeking.

One of the efforts of the arts and
cultures was that there was a city
ordinance tax. The ordinance is Number
453 and designated downtown as the
cultural district. We ought to do more
with that. We could do a lot more with
that if we just would advertise it. We
did one on water and waterways. We take
all our of our citizens to the classes
to see the county wastewater treatment
plant. And if you haven't been there
Holstein

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

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

Holstein

One foundation also recently said to me that the FOCUS indicators gives us an insight to know the community's assets, and challenges and that help foundations with their funding. So we're going to continue to do that and we're going to partner with the Central New York community foundation on our indicators.

We're working on civility in public discourse. We know the bad behavior in some meetings, I'm sure not at this one. But we know that we want to help people who plan public meetings so that the behavior is acceptable behavior and everybody gets heard, because it is democracy, everybody needs to be heard.

We're working with the Parks program, the Syracuse University, the program for advancement of research in conflicts and collaboration. So we're very excited about that, we hope to have a tool kit before the end of the year for that program.
Wisconsin who found us online. She said that we were probably the strongest citizens engagement organization she could find in the country. She came to a session and here's what she said when she left. She said, I'm blown away with what folks accomplish. After I sift all the information gathered in Syracuse I need to extend my research to incorporate all that I experienced with FOCUS.

And the same day, just the other day we had two visitors from Ottawa, Canada who want to start a Citizens Academy, and they too said they were blown away. That was the new word for enthusiastic about. They said they were blown away with the intensity of the class participation and the richness provided by the expert presenter. And many of you have been our expert presenters. So having said all that and I've let you know what we do and how we do it, we really want to recommend very strongly that we stay within your budget and maintain present levels, thank you.

DAVID PANASCI:

Good evening, I'm David Panasci, I live in the Town of Pompey, I have a management consulting practice in Camillus. Tonight I'm here as in my role of the Chairman of the Board of Syracuse Opera Company. But I'm also speaking on behalf of all the arts and cultural organizations that have been eliminated or cut in the county budget.

My purpose is to urge the members of the Legislature to restore this funding. While like most people I understand the financial pressures the county is feeling, these proposed cuts would have a significant potential, potentially permanent impact on our community. The Syracuse Opera like many of these other cultural institutions enhances the quality of life here in Central New York. It should be noted not only that they enhance the quality of life, but as mentioned earlier, they have an impact of our economy, through generating sales tax, through paying their employees and also generating payrolls for workers at restaurants and other local businesses.

In recent years a lot of these organizations have worked diligently collaborating behind the scenes to reduce costs and still maintaining the high quality of cultural offerings for our community. To Mr. Doucette's point we really get a big bang for our buck. I'll give you an example. The Syracuse Opera Company has a long-standing partnership with the Syracuse Symphony. In any given year the Opera Company hires the Symphony to the tune of about a hundred thousand dollars. In essence the Opera Company is one of the biggest supporters of the Syracuse Symphony. A lot of our cultural organizations are intertwined this way. If the proposed budget cuts went through this would not only put the Opera Company at risk but it would also have a serious financial impact on the Symphony as well.

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

And I know that there is some people that believe that some of these cultural organizations could deal with less funding. That is not the case. The depth of some of these cuts could put many of these organizations in jeopardy.
Panasci/Kern

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

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

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

Kern

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

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

1 Kern

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

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

20 It's not just achievement that we brought 60,000 people to the Everson alone, let alone what was happening at Stage, at Symphony, at Opera, for example. But this has brought positive results to this community in the end of this community in the most positive possible way. And all of this took place in the most challenging, difficult economic times we've ever seen. Arts and culture rallied and now should not be turned away but rather embraced as something that brought millions of dollars into this community in the end of 2009 beginning of 2010. And also because it's not just an arts product, it enriched the lives of everybody here in this community who chose to participate, and those numbers were huge.

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

20 You make the decision about funding and
Kern
we as to how we're going to work with
that.
You already heard from Mr. Doucette
and Mr. Panasci about the amount of
money we're talking about, and it seems
trivial. To me it's a lot of money. To
all of us individually it's a lot of
money, and it's important in the budget
too, if there is no money to support it
one dollar is too much. But it's
one-tenth of one percent of the county
budget for the whole arts and culture
budget line of support. And the amount
that's being contested is 3/100ths of a
percent of the budget. And I think that
this is something that has to be kept in
mind for future discussion about what
we're funding truly should be.

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

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

Let me talk about some of the more
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 snow plowing from the county
to the towns makes no sense. We have
the personnel, equipment and facilities
to do the job correctly and safely.

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

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

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

County. The county has said that it is willing to contract out the health services even if it costs more than the current costs. Let's use common sense. The county has done little to nothing to hire a new doctor to oversee health services. Rather ran away from the issue and tried to contract it out.

Contracting out is not the solution to tough problems. Let me ask you how contracting out has worked out in the OnCenter. Mismanagement of money has left more oversight by the county and taking over the cleaning and maintenance of the buildings by Facilities.

The correctional food services has proposed cuts to the current cost of services 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, and it was brought back, they have county workers do it. The union will not sit back and allow the county to contract out our jobs. We have an exclusive right to this work and will legally challenge any movement to contract out for this work.

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

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

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

Graham

say enough is enough. We've all heard the numbers. We spend more money in New York State for Medicaid than the two largest -- the two next largest spending Medicaid states: California and Texas combined. We can no longer afford this kind of spending. A 3 percent cap on spending is hardly slowing down the run-away 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's time for them to feel the pinch. They must also look at consolidation and cut-back of 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 about $7 million of that money, which is supposed to be specifically used to avoid layoffs of public workers. We would like to know if that money has been used for that purpose, and if so why we talked about increasing the amount of layoffs in the budget?

I don't know about the back room agreements that were made for the use of the 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 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, 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 words common sense and politicians do not belong in the same sentence, but I trust that you can and will do the right thing for you and your family.

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

I'm here tonight as president of the Onondaga County Fire Association. I was born and raised in Onondaga County. I'm here also tonight with almost 35 years in fire and emergency medical services in Onondaga County. Additionally, I'm president of a family business on Burnet Avenue, and I'm a taxpayer. The reason for me to be 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.

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

Additionally, it's my understanding that the state police helicopter, 1816 covers 20 counties from Syracuse. So we may not be talking duplication of services. Remember the Bucky Phillips manhunt in Erie County several years back. The state police helicopter assigned here was unavailable to our residents. It was on that case for a protracted period of time.

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

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

The emergency responders will know that these victims, our first response families, and that would include fire, police, EMS, our first response families would have had a better chance of survival had Air 1 been available. Would you all want less for your families, especially if they go in harms way? I implore you, please don't take
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Beach
1 this life saving tool from us, the
2 firefighters, police agencies and EMS
3 providers of Onondaga County. Thank you
4 for your time.
5 VICE CHAIR CORBETT: David?
6 DAVID APPLETON: I'm afraid I don't
7 know enough about the --
8 VICE CHAIR CORBETT: I'm looking for
9 David, looks like O-S-B-O -- Osborne,
10 Concerned Citizen.
11 DAVID APPLETON: I can't hear you.
12 VICE CHAIR CORBETT: Is this you?
13 DAVID APPLETON: No.
14 VICE CHAIR CORBETT: All right,
15 David you'll have to wait then. I don't
16 have him on this list. Looks like Dick
17 Beach, Ruth Beltran, Sheriff Kevin Walsh
18 and Mel Simmons.
19 DICK BEACH: My name is Dick Richard
20 Beach. I've been a volunteer firefighter
21 for over 60 years. I joined the North
22 Syracuse volunteer fire department in
23 1948, I was elected fire chief in '58
24 and '59. I was the first director of

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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

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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-

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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
Beltran

1 community?

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

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

Sheriff Walsh

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

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

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

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

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

Sheriff Walsh

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

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

thoroughly in the initial budget presentation, every legislator has received a copy of the Air 1 DVD. I would just like tonight to let you hear that there are some misconceptions that need to be cleared up. First off, it is not a million tax dollars that are spent on Air 1 as the headlines would have us believe. The county cost is actually $600,000 depending on the number of flight hours that we have scheduled for any given year. And it's not just 7 medical flights with 1,418 missions, of which 24 were medical transports that saved lives. Secondly, the Air 1 sale gimmick. A quick look at the internet will show you there is a glut of similar helicopters for sale, making your projection of getting $1.8 million highly questionable. Now such a time, one time gimmick are more something that we tend to see in the state budget proposals not in a responsible Onondaga County budget.

What of the one time revenue, what's going to happen once that one time revenue does not come up to the $1.8 million this year? Are you going to take more police deputies to fill that budget gap? And what about next year? And finally, cars. We asked for 25 cars to keep on track for replacing police vehicles that before they become unsafe for emergency operation or become a repair nightmare costing more to keep them running than it would cost to buy replacements. You cut all of our police cars from the budget. Now Onondaga County is a big place, 800 square miles. We drive over 3 million miles a year answering a hundred thousand calls for police service.

If we have to wait until 2012's budget to replace vehicles we will have one-third of our marked police cars over 120,000 miles and 20 percent of our marked patrol cars over 150,000 miles. This is not safe, this is not acceptable. At the very best replace the police cars that are getting well past their stated life cycle.

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

I initially came to the table with $1.1 million in proposed cuts, and I'm sure that if we work together we can come up with a reasonable number that will help meet your goals without crippling our services. Gentlemen and ladies of the Legislature I do not envy the positions you are in. I fully understand your concerns. You all know that I once sat amongst your ranks during one of the worst budget years the county had ever faced up to that time. We made hard decisions. But we did not decimate the Sheriff's ability to provide for his constitutional mandate. And that mandate is to keep the peace in the county. The county recovered, times got better, they will again. Don't deprive this county of one its most precious commodities, it's reputation as a safe place to live and raise a family thank you.

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

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

One of the things I would like to take issue with you tonight is in the paper you made reference that Mercy Flight could do many of the chores that Air 1 does. I just want to say that this is like comparing apples to oranges. And I want to make it perfectly clear that it cannot happen, all right? Mercy Flight does not have the ability to do search and rescue. Mercy Flight does not have the ability to have ground communications with all of the police, fire and EMS workers on the ground. They do not have a high powered search light. They do not have infrared. They do not have the ability to pull up floaters out of these lakes on these overturned boats. They don't have the ability to pick up ice fishermen on the lakes. Mercy Flight also does not have the capability of a Bambi bucket to help the fire in their brush fires.

They also do not have the full capability to protect our fire, police, EMS and municipal workers in the time of crisis, all right?

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

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

MANNY FALCONE: Thank you, my name is Manny Falcone, I am the president of the Onondaga County Firemen's Association. I'm also the town Supervisor in the Town of Oneida Lake. Mercy Flight also does not have the capability of a Bambi bucket to help the fire in their brush fires. They also do not have the full capability to protect our fire, police, EMS and municipal workers in the time of crisis, all right?

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

Falcone

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

Once again the citizens of Onondaga County including the city of Syracuse have the potential of losing one of the most valuable life saving tools that the public safety section can provide. The Onondaga County Legislators present here tonight seek an easy mark to reduce the deficit. In the upcoming year's county budget the target they once again search and rescue. Mercy Flight does not have the ability to have ground painting on our helicopter commonly known as Air 1, is bigger than ever before. It's an easy mark for the Legislators because it's big dollar item in the budget, and eliminating it would make the job of balancing the budget much easier.

Meanwhile the Onondaga County Fire Coalition which consists of ranking officials from the Onondaga County Fire Chiefs Association, the Onondaga County Fire Police Association, and the Central Region Fire District Association find it necessary to express their extreme concern over the subject of grounding Air 1. This concern is not a selfish concern either. It should be a concern of every citizen, resident and visitor to our county. This 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 in the fire and EMS officials know all too well how valuable the sheriff's helicopter has been for the over 35 years it's been in operation. We have witnessed numerous rescues performed over the many lakes, rivers, forests and rural terrain and the life saving accomplishment in transporting critically injured from rural sections of Onondaga County to our area hospitals.
Falcone

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

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

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

Falcone/Dirienzo

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

DENISE DIRIENZO: I’m Denise Dirienzo, the executive director of the landmark Theater, also a life long resident of Onondaga County, and a taxpayer in the Town of Pompey. So I certainly understand what we’re all going through this year as residents and decision makers.

I’m here about the stage house

Dirienzo

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

We have a commitment letter from a consortium of local banks, we have hired our general contractor, architect, acquired the necessary property and spent a million and-a-half dollars to get to this point. It’s going to be a year of construction and then we reopen to the benefit of all the county, to have diverse offerings, to have more entertainment, to bring more residents downtown, of Onondaga County and to bring other county residents in to have an economic impact.

We currently had a 14 million dollars impact in 2009. We’re looking to double that. That translates into

Dirienzo/Fowler

people coming downtown to eat, coming downtown to see the show, to have cocktails, to stay at hotels, it increases and generates revenue for the county.

I ask that you please keep this in, and help us stay alive. Without continuing and moving forward with our expansion slated for next week the Landmark Theatre will close. We have a contingency with our bank loan, for our contingency with the county, a lot of contingencies here. If we do not move forward, if that does not happen, we have no ability to generate revenues.

It takes a year to book a show. So please keep the Landmark Theatre in downtown, please keep Salina Street moving towards revitalization, thank you.

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

1 and reducing the sheriff's department.
2
3 As the Chief of Police for the City of Syracuse we depend very heavily upon
4 Air 1. I am averaging a gun a day,
5 recovering a gun a day from the streets
6 of the city of Syracuse. Our streets
7 are becoming increasingly more
8 dangerous. We rely very heavily upon
9 Air 1 to provide air support for our
10 police officers who are chasing these
11 armed gunmen through the back yards of
12 the city of Syracuse. And without that
13 helicopter we have to place human beings
14 in harms way. It is extremely important
15 to us.
16
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

Chief Fowler

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

Chief Fowler

1 We're looking for the upper echelon of
2 the work force environment. They're
3 already employed some place, someone
4 else would like to hire them too.
5 That's what we're looking for.
6
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
20 They go out day in and day out and
21 risk their lives. Their family members
22 kiss them good night, they leave to go
23 to work. The only job, one of the only,
24 few jobs where you kiss your loved one
25 good bye and when they go to work there
26 is an opportunity they may not return.

Chief Fowler/Mossotti

1 that night. Each and every night day in
2 and day out they make a sacrifice, their
3 family makes a sacrifice. So we're
4 sitting here tonight going forward in
5 our way of saying thank you to them is
6 to say that they're not going to be
7 employed anymore?
8
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
17 **SHERRY MOSSOTTI:** Good evening, my
18 name is Sherry Mossotti, executive
19 director of Leadership Greater Syracuse.
20 Several weeks ago when this county
21 budget hearing was actually announced I
22 put the date on my calendar immediately.
23 And I was excited and enthused to be
24 able to come here and talk about the
25 good work this organization and many of
26 our arts and culture organizations do
Mossotti

for our community.

As some of you may know, Leadership Greater Syracuse was founded back in 1990 by Nicholas Pirro and the County of Onondaga Legislators just like you, mayor Tom Young and others, with the intent of getting people actively involved in their community to make a difference. We all know that getting people involved is what drives this community. It retains our young talent. It builds the community and its workforce that we are all so very proud of. After all what is a town, a village, a community without its people?

Over the past several days several of our Leadership Greater Syracuse alumni, board and supporters, have reached out to our Legislators to express their concern over the proposed cuts to arts and culture. We're one of those cuts. We at Leadership Greater Syracuse know that we can't rely on government funding forever. We take the use of county tax dollars very seriously. Over the past eight years Leadership Greater Syracuse's reliance on county funds has gone from $25,000 back in 2001 to 9,400 in 2010. That's a 62 percent decrease in support from our county. While the city has maintained its level of support and believes in the work that we do.

Now we've managed to make up those funds during an extremely difficult economy. And to hold our own with a very, barely break even bottom line most of those years. In fact we were even working toward weaning our small non-profit agency away from government funding within the next two to three years, but Legislators, to go from $9,400 today to zero is a paralyzing blow. It will threaten this organization's existence. And that scares me. We as in years prior have anticipated the cuts, but I'll tell you we never anticipated a hundred percent cut.

Mossotti

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

I will tell you and many of us have done this, after speaking with both of these organizations I have learned that many of these organizations don't meet the funding criteria of those two organizations. 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 these agencies on the cutting block.

The OCDC and the CRT are going through changes that will affect funding criteria, which many of us may or may not be able to take advantage of. And we may become ineligible for those funds. As one legislator put it very eloquently in his response to one of our alum -- has the legislative body checked to verify whether our organization and these organizations, the CRT and OCDC, as quoted as places that authorized agencies our funding will be shifted to, have they even checked the legal authority to fund these organizations being cut?

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

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

About the project that each
graduating class since the year 2001 has
undertaken as a result of the graduation
from to direct benefit of this county
from building a home, to implementing a
community-wide marketing campaign during
the holiday season when people are home
visiting their families. What a great
time to reinforce the message that this
is a great place to live.
To adopting poverty ridden schools,
to educating community leaders about
Onondaga Lake clean-up and the wonderful
history of the lake. I can go on and on
about some amazing projects that the
graduates of this organization take on
every single year as a result of their
experience. And these are all wonderful
things. They're well worth the $9,400
that LGS is receiving in county funding
and well beyond.

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

Fittipaldi

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

Also, while
I'm up, is it possible to turn the heat
up a little bit?

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

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

1. County have elected to take their shares
2. of a sales tax revenue as a credit
3. against the county property tax. In
4. this way the town tax levies have been
5. segregated from the county levy
6. affording the taxpayers transparency
7. relative to any tax increases or
8. decreases and no doubt in their mind who
9. to call and what level of government to
10. question any changes.
11. Sales tax and the property tax are
12. commingled in the final budget. The
13. formula for each has been based on
14. different foundation and for good
15. reason. The property tax formula is
16. based on individual assessment of real
17. property market value. We all
18. understand that and we are advised of
19. the rate per thousand dollars of
20. assessed valuation in our tax bills.
21. The sales tax portion of the formula
22. has always been based on population,
23. also for good reasons. First of all, it
24. has nothing to do with real property.

Donovan

1. assessed valuation base. Again, sales
2. tax has nothing to do with real property
3. assessments. People generate sales tax.
4. If, as I have been told, these tax
5. increases are due to unfunded state and
6. federal mandates of 50 plus million
7. dollars, that would account for less
8. than 5 percent increase in the budget
9. and that could be easily explained.
10. These enormous projected increases are
11. unconscionable and singularly a result
12. of changing the way the sales tax
13. revenues are shared, causing county
14. property tax to rise.
15. I submit, that if this change had
16. not been implemented we would not be
17. here tonight. The Legislature could be
18. doing the work we elected them to do in
19. their chambers and the rest of us could
20. be out earning a living to pay our
21. taxes. Please rectify this ill advised
22. change. Thank you.

DICK DONOVAN: Good everyone, Dick
23. Donovan, president of the Onondaga

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

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
Nadeau

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

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

But what truly makes myself and many of my peers stay is the rich diversity Onondaga has always provided in music, arts and culture. We haven't had a need to go out there. To be surrounded by the quality of theatre, the variety of expression and the heart rendering in the music we are fortunate enough to have here shows the true life force and very fold of Central New York. To experience the incredible magic of the stage and the ability to transport you to a different world for even just a moment as the reprieve from the hardships of life. This is something that we thrive on and simply cannot be without.

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

The Aria Society makes attending performances affordable for college students. Syracuse and Central New York brings in students from all over and is constantly being told it's the main goal of Central New York to keep its students, to keep the people that it's educating and preparing to have them go into the work force here and enrich this community.

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

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

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

In times such as these the financial difficulties, violence and so much hatred in the world how can we afford to risk losing something that inspires us to be something greater? Nothing can touch us so deeply as music. Everyone in here has a song that makes them smile every time they hear it. A song that we seek out to solicit the joy whenever we are down. Think of what song that might
be to you and how it makes you feel. To lose the arts is to lose our future, is to lose our life force and what keeps us human. Please, please give us back our hope and Syracuse Opera.

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

As a 50 years veteran of the fire service, including volunteer civilian, United States Air Force military and 29 plus years at 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 life saving operations that were successful because of the response of properly and adequately trained fire, police and EMS personnel; events that would have had a tragic result 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's been no abuse of this service. There are strict protocols in place that provide guidance on how, when and where it should 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 who you heard from earlier was aboard Air 1 as it flew over the blazing factory. Only with the use of the forward-looking infrared system on the aircraft was the deputy fire coordinator able to determine the 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 safe and timely 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 a 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 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 infrastructure damage and receiving more than $300,000 in federal relief funds. Having more than 30 years of military experience, including flights in many different kinds of helicopters, including search and rescue operations in Iceland and 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
Waters

safety records of commercial medi-vac
helicopter services, including those
that operate locally, indicate a dis-
turbing number of crashes. The reason
is quite simple. If the government
helicopter is not flying it's saving
money. If the commercial service isn't
flying it's 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 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 the county
legislature for the recent sales tax
recommendation.

---

6. Martin

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

VICE CHAIR CORBETT: Okay for the
party crasher. Larry Martin from OCSPA;
Don Colon needs no introduction; Derek
Ford, Answer Coalition; and Toby Shelly.

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

It shocks me to think that members
of this Legislature, some members are
recommending elimination of almost 30
swat units from across the state
and our life saving helicopter. I can
only assume that members of the
Legislature may not be fully aware of
the scope of what OCSO members provide
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 New York
State standards for K9 training which
are in place today. And we've taught
basic K9 16 week school and required
maintenance training to the benefit of
over 55 K9 teams in New York State.

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 here in Onondaga County.

---

Waters

distribution. And I noted from Mrs.
Buerkle's release on the news what the
county taxpayers are paying for debt
service for such things. The waste is
in the towns and villages not the
sheriff's office. That's where the 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 rethink 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. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: My name is --
VICE CHAIR CORBETT: Excuse me.
UNIDENTIFIED MALE: God bless
America and Mr. Walsh and the jail house

---

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Vice Chair Corbett: When we had the
unannounced speaker I dropped the cards
and missed Marie Beaudette, if she's
here, was actually next after Mike
Waters, I apologize. Is Marie here?
Okay next is Don Colon and then Derrick

Don Donald Colon: Good evening county
Legislators are we having fun yet? For
those of you, 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 chair of the Ways

Colon
1 and Means Committee. And I then served
3 nine years as the county comptroller.
2 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?

Martin
1 Besides handling our own county reported
2 emergencies our SWAT members have been
3 relied upon to settle emergency
4 situations for the FBI, the DEA and the
5 US Marshal's to name a few. These
6 federal agencies know that we can
7 mobilize a professional force and
8 effectively to resolve dangerous
9 incidents.
10 In preparation for tonight I read a
11 letter prepared by one of my younger
12 colleagues, which I believe most of the
13 Legislators have received by e-mail. He
14 highlighted the many dangers we face
15 daily at our current staffing levels.
16 I'm now trying to imagine our members
17 attempting to handle these dangers and
18 the ever increasing volume of calls with
19 29 less members and without our eye in
20 the sky Air 1, which makes almost every
21 situation safer. Vehicle pursuits can
22 loosen up with Air 1, resulting in fewer
23 accidents and suspects inability to out-
24 run the chopper. Lost children and
25

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

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 a year plus a housing allowance, an automobile and a $127,500 bonus if she stays through 2015. This was in addition to the $750,000 entrance sign paid from the 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 that 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 year's budget. The partial solution is to increase the county's share of the 4 percent sales tax, which after all is 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, the cash that 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 of the cash available from the towns, schools, villages and the non-statutory part of the city's share you still would not completely offset the $55 million deficit. So what was your solution? You took the money from the towns over a three year period, which had little impact on the cash deficit because you were already getting most of the money as a credit against the tax levy. Then several of the towns, to be spiteful, and I emphasize that word, took all of the money they could get as cash.

Colon

further compounding the problem. You then gave the 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 of your actions?

Now to get out of this mess that you have created you're 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 percent to only 30 percent, because it is still too high. And I do not thank the Town of Lysander

Colon

increase the county's share of the 4 percent sales tax, which after all is 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, the cash that 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 of the cash available from the towns, schools, villages and the non-statutory part of the city's share you still would not completely offset the $55 million deficit. So what was your solution? You took the money from the towns over a three year period, which had little impact on the cash deficit because you were already getting most of the money as a credit against the tax levy. Then several of the towns, to be spiteful, and I emphasize that word, took all of the money they could get as cash.

Ford

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

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

I would like to say that we're outraged at the proposal to privatize the medical and mental health care provided in the quote unquote Justice Center jail. This is a budget hearing and as Ruth pointed out, and I think
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<td>It's appropriate to note that the proposal, you know, won't really save the county any money as of right now. I don't think there is any significant amount of money. I would say even if it were to save the county money, there are certain things which, you know are not commodities and not negotiable. The health of people is one of those certainly. A primary thing that the privatization would do would be to decrease the county's liability for any deaths, injuries, mistreatment that occurs in the jail, which has been on the rise recently. Two deaths in the last year. Ruth talked about Chuniece Patterson, who was admitted in the Justice Center, had an ectopic pregnancy which is when the fetus attaches to the fallopian tube and she bled to death overnight. There was also Raul Pinet, Jr., he was a 31 year old Puerto Rican man who was beaten by the police brutally. They said he was trespassing but you know, he had to have permission to enter the house, which he was supposedly trespassing. The woman whose house said she was more afraid of the police than she was of Raul. Anyway, when he was admitted to the Justice Center, placed in a holding cell, 50 minutes later he was unconscious, he was later pronounced dead and the medical examiner ruled that death a homicide. The DA has not yet released that autopsy report, which is something we would also like to see done. So you know, we would like to say that the people in the Justice Center jail, you know, most of those people are workers, many of workers without jobs, impacted by the economic crisis, right. You know, it's no -- it's not a radical statement to say that crime increases as poverty increases. Crime increases, especially violent crime. Last time there was a dramatic decrease in violent crime that was 1993, that was dramatic decrease in the unemployment rates. You know many of these people have not been convicted of a crime. Raul and Chuniece, they weren't allowed to face, you know, they weren't allowed to receive a fair hearing, you know, because law enforcement officials basically decided that they were, you know, the judge, jury and executioner. And privatization in general has never benefitted working people. The privatization of water, social services, you know, transportation, gas, electricity, parking meters, has never benefitted working people. The only thing it benefitted is the corporations that win the contracts. In this case corporations that are not even in Onondaga County. So you know, basically taking the county jobs, union jobs I believe, from this county. So this is it, I mean you know, our basic contention here, you know, I would</td>
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<td>I think the main issue that I can see is a lack of funds in the budget. I don't think anybody is arguing that the helicopter isn't justified in the County Leg. I don't think anybody is arguing that the positions aren't justified,</td>
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<th>Shelley</th>
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<td>Like to submit these people are human beings, they're not valued with which you know, from which the private companies can extract a surplus, you know, and make a profit. I mean our health is not for sale essentially. Thank you.</td>
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<th>TOBY SHELLY:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>My name is Toby Shelly, I'm from Otisco, that is in Onondaga County. I was told I only had a minute to speak now I've got three. I work for the sheriff's department, I'm a police supervisor on the road patrol, was a 26 military veteran of the United States Air Force, Iraqi war veteran, I'm also a the deputy fire chief at the 174th Fighter Wing. I'm here to offer some solutions to the problems.</td>
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| 2 | I think the main issue that I can see is a lack of funds in the budget. I don't think anybody is arguing that the helicopter isn't justified in the County Leg. I don't think anybody is arguing that the positions aren't justified, |

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Shelley
1 because we've had the helicopter for
2 years, we've had the positions for
3 years. People in front of me funded
4 that. So it was justified.
5 So how can we save some money to
6 keep those positions and keep that
7 helicopter? One thing I think we can
8 fix is the drive out take home car
9 program. And by fixing that we can
10 drive some waste out of the budget.
11 What I'm talking about is taking a look
12 at take home cars that have never
13 responded to off duty calls and bring
14 those back. By bringing those back we
15 can put a better schedule together for
16 the road patrol. By putting together a
17 better schedule it would decrease over-
18 time.
19 Something else we can do is
20 unschedule scheduled overtime. For
21 example, in December 20th of 2009 the
22 Post Standard reported on some people
23 that got overtime, and the overtime was
24 in excess of their base pay. That

Shelley
1 should be unscheduled. That would save
2 quite a bit of money.
3 Something else we can do is develop
4 a program to improve morale. Something
5 isn't in place at the moment we could
6 put it in place that would decrease sick
7 leave. If we decrease sick leave we'll
8 decrease overtime.
9 Something else we should be doing
10 that's not being done is a proactive
11 policy to prevent unnecessary deaths in
12 the jail. I believe better management
13 is the key to saving the jobs and saving
14 the helicopter. We should be sharpening
15 our pencils not using our red pens. I
16 invite the County Legislature and the
17 sheriff to look at my programs. Thank
18 you very much.
19 VICE CHAIR CORBETT: Next four is
20 Donna Conklin, Jay Land, Dave Appleton
21 and Al Kalfass, I believe, with the Air
22 1 program.

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

103
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

104
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
that can be outlined that would decrease medication costs, hospital costs, over-time costs and improvement of care. Such measurements would include the modification of policies, additions of procedures, additional training, changing and staffing patterns, utilizing the skills and abilities of the staff, additional protocols, utilizing drug reps in the community, and much more.

Why are we supporting the idea of giving Onondaga County monies to a company that would not 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 never surface back into Onondaga County as much more.

Shelley
they are not from this state. If you were to cross-match many of the inmates you will find they were also cared for by the Department of Health. They are our people. Their health would be greater compromised if not taken care of in the jail, costing taxpayers even more money 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?

Why do we not keep the control? Why would we give control to outsides while bearing the liabilities? We need to keep the control of the correctional system within our own county. These are our people. We should not give up control of what happens to our people. When inmates are released into the community it is difficult to track, and in the care, putting a huge burden back on the Department of Health and the community. Untreatable hypertension in

Shelley
the jail may lead to stroke out in the community, thereby increasing medical costs to the county and to its people. Many lawsuits surround the incompetence and unjust care of the private companies. Federal courts record shows CMC has been sued 40 times in the past eight years. During the past decade the family that now manages medical care for Monroe County jail 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

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

The Commissioner of Corrections in New York State condemned PHS for the company’s refusal to admit and address deadly mistakes. 15 times in the past four years the state has disciplined PHS nurses and doctors. Doctors on-site overruled 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 $1 million. During an audit with CMS, the records show that CMS failed to provide medications to inmates during
Shelley

the required period 46 percent of the time.

While it is true nine correctional facilities have elected to give privatizing a chance, the other 94 percent of the New York jails and prisons are taking care of their own, as it should be. There are approximately 135 facilities in New York State and only nine 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 non-compliant and very evasive. Paperwork is reported as unfortunately not reaching its intended destination.

Who wants to deal with that?

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 whole family from the state of Virginia to Onondaga County where he planned a long career at Onondaga Corrections.

The inmates are in custody and are the property of the county. Onondaga County is in fact liable and is subject to lawsuits on defense. This is not 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.

How can the county justify raising property taxes almost a hundred percent while allowing the corporation to come in and make a profit from a job that we are able to do and have been doing, and with guarantee, do it better? Property taxes in 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?

The psych doctors and staff are not bailing out. They will be here to stay, according to 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 very deep as they are part of Onondaga County and want to utilize every resource to help its own people.

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

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 and lack of medical insurance, increased crimes, poverty, depression and frustration to say a few. The fact is that we are professional and very caring individuals and best suited to resolve the problems of our own people.
The Department of Health 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 strains in the ER's, clinics, doctors 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. Thank you.

VICE CHAIR CORBETT: Jay Land.
CHAIRMAN JORDAN: Remind speakers to limit your comments to three minutes.

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

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

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

I did not accept that. I was pushing and pushing and I finally supplied them with several names of people who are on the zoning administration. Mr. Cuffy wrote back, put in writing that these people were not county employees. And I accepted that, I never found out the truth. But I kept pressuring them to check their facts. And finally Mr. Cuffy wrote to me that there were some county employees working in the same physical office as zoning administration personnel is how he put it. That was not good enough. I did

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

And finally in writing admitted that Heather Lamendola and five others were county employees, while still maintaining that they only work in the same physical office makes it sound like they're just sharing office space and not running zoning administration.

Heather Lamendola is zoning administrator, she's the head of the department. She's on the payroll, she gets a county paycheck I assume.

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

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

Consolidation seems to be the buzz word these days. Ms. Mahoney is very gung-ho on consolidation, taking over services from local government and presumably needing an increase in staff and money to run these consolidated services. When she can't know, she was unaware of something that was consolidated about six years ago. And I accepted her first dozen or so denials.
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<td>I would never learn the truth, and I</td>
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<td>don’t know how long it took them to</td>
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<td>There is newspaper article in the</td>
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<td>Post Standard July 29th, she was denying</td>
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<td>publicly contributed to her campaign, an</td>
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<td>organization that contributed heavily to the</td>
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<td>her campaign asked for help with the</td>
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<td>zoning administration. Then Mr. Cuffy</td>
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<td>and Ms. Mahoney stepped right up and</td>
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<td>ordered Heather Lamendola to stop</td>
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<td>enforcing the law that had been annulled</td>
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<td>by the state. Yet Mr. Cuffy in writing</td>
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<td>still insists that it’s not zoning</td>
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<td>administration, it’s not a county agency.</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>They take orders from the county when it</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>suits their purposes. I just think you should</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>be aware they have not, I do not have the</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>truth. The County Executive claimed they</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>didn’t work for her for a year. Finally</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>admitting that they work for them. I still</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>have not received an answer. I think as</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Americans we should be able to see the laws</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>that are being used against us. I don’t</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>think it exists. They will not admit it and</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>they will not show me this law and ignored</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>my requests. And the struggle I had to go</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
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<td>30</td>
<td>through just to admit they had employees</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>working in the same physical office space</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>is incredible. If I’m redundant it’s</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>because it took me repeated, repeated</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>arguments with them just to get this far. I</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>still have not, I do not have the truth. The</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>county employees are the entire staff of the</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>zoning administration, they still</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>will not admit that to me.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Kalfass</th>
<th>118</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>maybe Mr. Rhinehart can take this and</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>will continue.</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><strong>AL KALFASS</strong>: Good evening, my name</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>is Al Kalfass, I’m a paramedic. Good</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>evening. I would like to start by thanking</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>all the EMS, fire, law enforcement personnel</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>and their families for their continued</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>dedication, sacrifices and services that they</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td>perform daily to keep my family,</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>friends, neighbors and community safe.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>As a member of the Onondaga County public</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>safety community you wake up not knowing</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>what is going to happen throughout the day.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>What you do know is that the unthinkable and</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>unexpected happen every day. It boils down</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>to bad things happen to people from every</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>part of our society. You don’t think</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>misfortune or tragedy will occur or how it</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>will directly affect you or your family and</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>if they will be okay when it happens. I am</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>not only talking about the physical</td>
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<th>1</th>
<th>Kalfass</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>factors that affect us as responders, I</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>am also talking about the mental factors</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>that are also part of the job. As an EMS</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>provider I can only give examples of</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>performing CPR on a newborn baby recently</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>brought home by its parents and having them</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>look at you hoping and praying that</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>everything is going to be okay. It is even</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>more difficult if you yourself have</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>recently brought home your first child, you</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>can only imagine what you would do if you</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>were in their situation.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>This is no different when you're working on</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>a fellow public servant who was doing their</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>job protecting, helping and serving our</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>community, a victim to these bad things</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>that happen. It could be a police officer</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>shot during a routine traffic stop that</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>gets hit from behind or it could be a</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>firefighter trapped in a burning building</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>trying to save the person who did not get</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>out in time or the EMS crew that's</td>
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**VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Mr. Appleton,
Kalfass

to a hospital a critically ill patient
when a car crashes into them.
I mention these incidents because
they 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 them.
As a community we continue to face
hard economic times and we understand
that. We understand that we have the
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 question to the Legislators are
these: If it is our public safety
agencies duties and responsibilities to
protect our community, whether through
the fire service, law enforcement,
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?
What resource does Onondaga County
currently provide to all the public
safety agencies that solely support all
their missions? The answer is Air 1.
I'll explain in more detail shortly.
Third and the toughest question 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 in this county worth? Based on
several different statements or news
articles your answers vary. And I must
note that some of you on the Legislature
have managed to accomplish putting a
price tag on the human life between the
price of $500,000 to $700,000 in this
upcoming year or if you plan on selling
it, at $1.8 million. Based on my
research I found no judge, jury or other
governmental official that has been able
to accomplish that feat.

Kalfass

The article in this morning's Post
Standard carried remarks attributed to
some of the legislators, remarking only
7 out of 24 medical flights that Air 1
made were Onondaga County residents.
We're 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
does not believe they are entitled to
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 have to check the
tax rolls and see if a property tax is
up to date on its taxes before we send
fire services to protect that property
or care for their residents?
Surely this would save countless tax
dollars. I can see from your reaction
that you think these remarks are
asinine. Perhaps, but no more asinine
than those already published in the
local newspaper about Air 1 or our
responders. Please understand that I'm
not talking about all the county
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 do, 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.
Why don't we shift the same energy and
focus to ways to make the program work
even better and ways to reduce the cost
and burden to our taxpayers?
For those that have supported the
program or that are truly on the fence
about cost versus benefits of the Air 1
Kalfass

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

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

Kalfass

offered or what life depended on it. Over a month ago a video was given to you about the Air 1 program. It was made to help inform you and the public about the Air 1 program and why it is actually unique. The purpose of this video was to hopefully open the door to more discussions concerning Air 1 and the cost versus benefit and to utilize representatives of all the agencies involved. This is not simply a line item on the budget. This is a life item in the public safety. It directly affects the lives of our personnel and families of all these we serve. Our goal is to make sure you have the facts, accurate information and supportive data so you can make an informed decision. We currently are preparing a document that identifies factors to be included and delineating measurable success of the Air 1 program. We understand that these are hard economic times and hard decisions must be made. These discussions should not be made in haste or without benefit of full and accurate information. Your decision will directly affect the lives and the safety of all our public safety personnel, their families and those they serve. All the public safety providers 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 for providing these services. Currently seeing increased unemployment rates and an increase in emergency calls for services. If you watch your 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 as well as mass casualty incidents, flooding, haz-mat calls as well as several specialty rescues, not to mention local hospitals going on internal disaster due to overcrowding. It is obviously not the time to reduce our public safety services or staff, period. Especially one as vital as Air 1. This 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 the budget. However, this benefits all of us.

We're asking you to create a special line item for the county budget for the Air 1 program and run it like a business. I think one of the main points people don't understand how the Air 1 program currently works and who it involves. The Onondaga County sheriff’s office primary function is one of law enforcement. Charged with the responsibility of providing safety of the citizens of Onondaga County. Responding to life and death situations...
of those non-criminal nature, consistent with countywide emergency medical service protocol. They are responsible for the aircraft, maintenance and the OCSO of flight team members. University Hospital currently operates Air Medical Services Air 1 program, holds a Certificate of Need required by New York State Department of Health to operate the medical mission of Air 1. It supplies the team with all the necessary equipment, supplies, medication and medical direction. The trauma nurse/helicopter coordinator is responsible for those aspects and works closely with all team members as well as the University Trauma Team. Upstate University medical is incorporated. The Upstate Emergency Medical Group Incorporated 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 the aircraft, maintenance and the OCSO of flight team members. University Hospital currently operates Air Medical Services Air 1 program, holds a Certificate of Need required by New York State Department of Health to operate the medical mission of Air 1. It supplies the team with all the necessary equipment, supplies, medication and medical direction. The trauma nurse/helicopter coordinator is responsible for those aspects and works closely with all team members as well as the University Trauma Team. University Trauma Team.

Kalfass

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

The Western Area Volunteer Emergency Services is responsible for managing the day-to-day medical operations of the flight team to include daily equipment supply checks, quality assurance, personnel records, including the medical team certifications, scheduling, training, safety, orientation of new members, call reviews and documentation of patient care records and oversight of the medical team's 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 1 is requested to respond to two different type incidents at the same time, the entire flight crew makes a decision based on the seriousness of each and all the factors known at the time.

Kalfass

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

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

I got the numbers, real quickly
Pappalau

excellent fiscal reputation. Let's keep
it that way. I think that you must run
the county as you would run a business.
With the exception of police personnel,
with the exception of fire personnel and
emergency medical personnel I think
you've got to seriously consider
additional layoffs. Not only of
management people but also represented
and non-represented non-management
people.
Keep in mind people laid off, as I
understand it, now can collect
unemployment benefits up to 99 weeks.
That doesn't make anyone destitute in my
judgment. Now, if the economy doesn't
turn around, which would also benefit
Onondaga County, in 99 weeks we all
better pack up our bags and find
somewhere to go.

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

Rumpf

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

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

VICE CHAIR CORBETT: Please give
your name.

KATHLEEN RUMPF: Kathleen Rumpf.

I'm here to ask you not to outsource
health care at the jail. It's not a
solution. It becomes more of a problem.
In a recent Public Safety Committee
meeting that I attended I heard Dr.
Morrow tell those of you who are on that

Rumpf

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

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

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

Rumpf

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

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

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

And how about the many who are sick
at the jail? I'm not saying that people
don't belong in the jail. Certainly
there are some that belong in the jail.
They shouldn't be abused, they shouldn't
Rumpf
be mistreated, they should be taken care of. But if we emptied the jail of all those who didn't belong there, gee you might even be able to use some of that space for programs for the youth and other things that keep people out of jail. Maybe you don't care about those in the jail. But we are responsible. I am responsible. You are responsible and the jail is such a closed environment. Very few of us know what goes on in the jail. Story after story in the newspapers written, death after death. And then silence until the next death. The next meeting, the next story of neglect. Take care of the people in the jail, take care of them or let them go. I would like to tell you about a person who is in the jail recently. And she was quadriplegic, quadriplegic in the jail. She ended up between two and three months in the jail. She was arrested on a petit larceny shoplifting.

Rumpf
crime and she was put on probation, but she refused to wear an ankle monitor. And there was a reason for that. Because it's very important to, especially for quadriplegics to take care of skin. And anything tight and binding would be very detrimental to their health. She was there two or three months because of that. And this is not unusual. There are so many people who don't belong there. I guess I'll close by saying to that many many have worked very hard, and there are many good people in the jail who work there who really care, nursing staff, mental health staff. The Onondaga County sheriff's deputies who work in the jail, they really care. There is always a few bad apples but there is very poor management at the jail. The sheriff is never there. It's something he doesn't really care about I guess. The oversight is rotten, jails and prisons all over the country, the. Fisher
oversight is horrible. And you know, I could say there is no such thing as a good jail, but there are well run jails and that's what we need. And in closing I would urge you to listen very closely to Barrie Gewanter from the ACLU, Syracuse, New York ACLU, because she has a very well prepared statement. Thank you.

VICE CHAIR CORBETT: Mr. Fisher. WILLIAM FISHER: Thank you my name is William Fisher, I was born and raised here and in Onondaga County. I live in the great Town of Onondaga. As the Deputy County Executive my responsibilities include the exercise of general administrative responsibility on behalf of the County Executive over all financial administrative units of the county government. And 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
| Page 141 |  
| 1 | Fisher  
| 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  
19 **ROGER BULL:** Good evening my name is  
20 Roger Bull, New York State Nurses  
21 Association. I represent the nurses  
22 that are in the jail at this time,  
23 awaiting outsourcing. We don't believe  
24 the outsourcing is necessary. It will  
25 actually create more liability with the

| Page 142 |  
| 1 | Bull  
| 2 | private agencies that you hire.  
| 3 | Rikers Island, Westchester County,  
| 4 | if you investigate what happened in  
| 5 | those areas you will see that they had  
| 6 | an actual increase in liability.  
| 7 | Correct internal management of personnel  
| 8 | decreases your liability. This is  
| 9 | what's lacking within this jail. Low  
| 10 | salaries do not attract nurses. There  
| 11 | is an extreme amount of nursing  
| 12 | positions that are available to nurses  
| 13 | right now. Why would they come to work  
| 14 | in the jail for 5 or $6 an hour less?  
| 15 | Management practices and personnel  
| 16 | distribution should be assessed to  
| 17 | provide effective and efficient medical  
| 18 | care within the system. Currently  
| 19 | management has weakened decision-making,  
| 20 | they're ineffective in utilizing current  
| 21 | policies and procedures and they are  
| 22 | disengaged in the management of medical  
| 23 | personnel, causing the exodus of staff.  
| 24 | This in turn creates internal tension  
| 25 | 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  
9 **VICE CHAIR CORBETT:** Mary Ann Fields  
10 from Upstate; Holly Sammons, county  
11 public library; Al LaFrance, Independent  
12 Fur Harvesters; and Tom Law, citizen.  
13  
14 **MARY ANN FIELDS:** Good evening, my  
15 name is Mary Ann Fields, I am a  
16 constituent of Cicero, born, raised and  
17 educated in Upstate, Onondaga County and  
18 Upstate New York. Also the trauma and  
19 helicopter program manager at University  
20 Hospital.  
21 I'm here to talk about our sisters,  
22 brothers, mothers, fathers and our  
23 children that are injured every day in  
24 Onondaga County. Even when we're  
25 outside of Onondaga County when we're  

10/12/2010 11:47:21 PM  
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36 of 49 sheets
Fields

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

Air 1 provides a safe and rapid transport within the county when other public agencies are not available. These patients need definitive care, trauma surgeons, trauma nurses, the operating room or the ICU. The chance of survival decreases significantly within that golden hour. This has been proven in literature multiple times over and over. These patients are brought back to their families in Onondaga County after and due to this joint center working hand in hand. Thank you to all of them.

Sammons

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2 resident of the city of Syracuse and I'm a voter. I tell you I'm wearing all these hats when I speak to you.

Before the early retirement incentive began this year at the library, which consist of the Central Library and 8 branches we had a roster of approximately 102 full time employees. Six full time staff members that took advantage of the early retirement. Now as we go into the 2011 budget we're looking at elimination of eight full time positions. The library is looking at a minimum of a 10 percent reduction in our full time staff. This doesn't include the 3 titles we lost last year.

In times of economic downturn it's a well known fact that people turn more to libraries for help. For help in job seeking, for access to technology that they cannot afford, for basic literacy needs. I could go on for hours talking about what people use libraries for. We cannot continue to provide these services to the public with a 10 percent slash our full time staff.

These past two years have not been the beginning of our reduction in staff and budget. In my twelve years at the Central Library I've seen the demand for library services from the residents of Onondaga County increase, while the staff is cut and our budgets are diminished. We continue to do more with less. We have never done less with less and I don't see us continuing in the future doing less with less.

As a 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 this diminishing staff. We have also seen promotional positions eliminated, denying many long term employees the opportunity for advancement. We don't deny service to the public. We welcome anyone and
everyone to use our libraries. And yet we think nothing of denying our staff the right to work in a safe productive work environment. An organization cannot continue year after year and ask more and more of their workers and continue to take away while taking away what they need.

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

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

LaFrance

Hi, my name is with the sportsman groups the Independent Fur Harvesters. We have leased a building at Pratt's Falls for almost twenty years. Twenty years ago we were asked to take an active part in Pratt's Falls. We developed a Carlie lot in the back. We work with the Boy Scouts. We planted trees, reforested it, we built trails, we established a bird watching program, put in bird houses, etc. etc.

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

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

LaFrance

All the time while this was going on we're hearing how Pratt's Falls is a non-revenue producing park. We hear how Pratt's Falls does not compare to Onondaga Lake Park. Pratt's Falls is not Onondaga Lake and never will be. Onondaga Lake is hustle and bustle, excitement, money, revenue. It's just what this is about. Pratt's Falls is not a revenue park. Pratt's Falls is peace, it's tranquility, it's quiet.

And if you've never been there, I can tell you you've never been there because if you've ever been there you wouldn't be cutting it.

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

I'm a 31 year sportsman education instructor. We have had hundreds of
LaFrance
1 10 to 8. Went to part time closure of
2 the park to try to save it. Then it
3 went down to two people trying to do it.
4 That's about all the cuts I think that
5 Pratt's Falls Park can take. It doesn't
6 need closure.
7 Pratt's Falls in addition to being a
8 park is also part of the heritage in the
9 Town of Pompey. It's the site of one of
10 the first saw mills in the entire
11 county. It's part of the heritage and
12 the history of the town as well as the
13 county. We've used it and called it as
14 a sportsman group, we called it home for
15 over twenty years. We've had promises
16 come and never be fulfilled.
17 I met with one of the superintendents
18 when the building burned a few years ago
19 tragically, and we went to Allegany
20 State Park. And we looked at the way
21 the wildlife is placed at Allegany State
22 Park. The superintendent from the
23 county went with me. We agreed, and our
24 club agreed to furnish taxidermy mounts,

LaFrance
1 wild life scenes, and to put our money
2 where our mouth was. We bought the
3 mounts, we don't have a building to put
4 them in. The building is gone and never
5 been replaced. I don't know where the
6 insurance money went when the park
7 building burned, when it went, but the
8 funding was never put back into Pratt's
9 Falls. It's been years since the
10 building burned.
11 Do not take this park. Don't close
12 this park. Because the people that
13 attend Pratt's Falls are not the people
14 that want to go and listen to the
15 jamborees and watch the speed boats
16 races and listen to the dogs barking and
17 the trams and the trolleys and the
18 bicycles, and they don't want to get run
19 over and bumped into, which is what
20 happens at Onondaga Lake.
21 The people that use this park want
22 to go and have a picnic on a Sunday
23 afternoon. They want to sit there with
24 the peace and the quiet. The ball field

Law
1 Stanczyk. I think I might have heard
2 enough but maybe there is a little left
3 of one side of my brain here to get
4 going. I think we're getting near the
5 end. But Tom Law from Eastwood, that's
6 me and my dad moved here since '54, been
7 around quite a while. Gone through the
8 schools here, family spent on education
9 quite a bit. Mom, from the schools
10 Central Square, she taught there for 34
11 years, 33 years. I have sisters in
12 Baldwinsville teaching and Sandy my
13 sister taught at Franklin for 25 years
14 and then Solace for 11 years and
15 retired. So I have a little background.
16 My mother was at Project Advance for
17 25 years and high school advance
18 placement credits. My dad sold
19 insurance here for 33 years, mostly with
20 Connecticut Mutual Life Health
21 Insurance. My brother's new general
22 agent for four years with Massachusetts
23 Mutual, about a hundred people on staff
24 in different satellite communities and
in Syracuse after about 27 years following my father in the insurance business. So we have a little bit here in Syracuse and I helped build this building.

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

As far as the budget $1,189,600. I think that's something like this year's budget. Working with numbers, vary, get numbers in your head a little bit. So I think that we attracted a little attention here tonight. Could have been a lot more people. I salute you people from OnGov, our Legislators and also I thank Mr. Antonochi, Rowley, other people, budget people that put this together, the auditors and budgeters.

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

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

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

So how am I going to help tonight? Well I'd say this, just a couple of general things, kind of in closing but, these numbers, a lot of these lines can be automatic. I mean the budget, it's like, you know, let's go to the Probation Department, let's go to the Sheriff's Department, let's go to the Library. The lines are there year to year. But a couple things about that, they aren't really completely automatic because you vote on them. And someone has to say, where the human part of this is, yeah that's a good budget or let's look at this and bear down on the pencil and make it a good budget. Or let's say that this price is okay if you're in purchasing. Yeah, that's the price we're going to take. That's the human side of it, you set the acceptable prices. And the numbers just don't flow, someone has to say, well where is the boundary of the numbers? I mean that's the difficulty of hearing each other in the Legislature.

I mean saying where, you know, who gets to say and when the argument stops and when someone has to say. And it can be difficult. And especially with these tax increases. I mean I heard about these tax increases percentages for some of these towns. And I saw where the
1 Law
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

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

1 Law
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

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

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

I, for my company for the last 17 years, I call on small businesses, and I talk to business owners. And I also talk to the employees of those businesses. And the life out there in the private side is not what the life is on the public side. Two accounts I left today have their employees working four days a week and they collect unemployment on the fifth. I've had business owners tell me they have not taken a raise in the last two years. My company, for its management people, we did not take a raise. My 401(k), I contribute to my pension. I also pay for my health care. We have suspended our 401(k) payments or the company match. So there is pain out there.

I don't hear anybody talking about sharing the pain here. I think we spend too much money. I'm very concerned about my property taxes. You're taxing me out, the user taxes, the sales taxes. And I understand the state of New York, there is unfunded mandates that come down and you guys have a tough job. You can't control the unfunded mandates. I'll try to control that with the rest of you in November at the voting booth. But I'm concerned about no one

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

While the police chief has 29 people he has not replaced, I would guess probably could eliminate another 29. I heard different numbers of the amount of county employees. I'm not saying I want anybody to lose their jobs, but jobs, creation of wealth comes from the private end not from the public end taking from the people who are earning. I've heard numbers of 3,200 employees in the County of Onondaga. Now I'm hearing 4,500. I don't know how many employees we have. I would ask you to take a look and say do we need those employees, do we need them all?

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

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

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

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
25 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

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
Gewanter

affiliate of the ACLU. I am also a
member of the new Cross Cultural
Coalition for Rights, known as
United As One. 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. I
received many calls and letters from
inmates in the Justice Center and from
their families. From time to time I
also hear from people who work in the
jail.

In the past two to three years the
number and the seriousness of these jail
related concerns has increased. These
concerns include experiences of
dismissive and demeaning treatment by
guards and medical staff, unnecessary
and excessive use of force, selective
use of restrictions and punishments,
blatant use of racial and homophobic
epitaphs 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 very challenging
environment yet still maintain their
professionalism, composure and compassion
who try to ensure the well-being of each
incarcerated person and follow the
procedures and policies designed to keep
everybody safe. I want to recognize and
praise these many 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 a group of deputies
decided to bypass procedure as seems to
have been the case 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've been most disturbed however by
the complaints I have received related
to the medical care. A few examples
include inmates denied essential
prescribed medications. Unconscionable
delays in emergency medical response and
medical attention for truly acute
injuries. Inmates with severe mobility
impairments denied the use of assistive
devices such as a wheelchair. Failure
to provide even the minimal standard of
care for severely disabled inmates. And
in one case failure to properly address
a wound that involved a drug resistant
and infectious bacteria.

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

pregnancy. The Commissions on
Corrections found that had Chuniece
received adequate responsible, competent
medical care her death would have been
prevented.

The answer here again is 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 just turn
away.

There is a qualified and committed
professional who became the Director of
Nursing only a couple of months ago. A
Public Health Nurse who seems to have
the drive and the will to fix the
problems, and contrary to previous
eamples she has an open door. Yet
instead of giving her the support and
the authority to fix the problem the
County is moving to eliminate 60 county
Gewanter

nursing mental health and medical
support jobs and then hand over the
responsibility 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
profit driven decisions about the medical
care of Onondaga county residents.
Legislators, you acknowledge that
this will not produce any cost savings
to the county. And even Mr. Cuffy
acknowledges that the county will not
evade its liability for lawsuits, for
injuries and deaths related to
deficiencies in care. And the records
of these few companies that provide
these services in other areas raise very
serious concerns about the quality of
care they provide. A few easy Google
searches reveal that several of these
companies have had problems with
inadequate staffing, as well as nursing
and doctors doing work they're not
qualified to do. They delay, deny
prescription medications. They do not
keep accurate and complete medical
records. They refuse to give medical
records to county and state officials so
they can adequately monitor contracts.
And they ignore or dismiss acute medical
needs. And lawsuits are the results.
Lawuits that would end up naming this
county.
See, it doesn't matter if the
company specializes in correctional
health if they do it badly. I'd much
rather you work 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 a new doctor to oversee the
care, fine, but don't throw the baby out
with the bath water. 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 facilities medical
director. But I've been told 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 the letter that
I sent out late last night, from my
organization, NAACP, Disabled in Action
and the League of United Latin American
Citizens known as ULAC.
Number 1. Conduct a searching and
thorough assessment of the quality of
care being provided under the current
system. We need to have a baseline for
comparison after a new system is
established and this must include an
honest assessment of the current
problems.
Right now I'm told county
administrators in negotiating a
contract, and this is Number 2, a
contract with a vendor they have

Gewanter

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keep accurate and complete medical
records. They refuse to give medical
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problems.
Right now I'm told county
administrators in negotiating a
contract, and this is Number 2, a
contract with a vendor they have
Frieda Weeks: Hi, my name is Frieda Weeks.

Hi, my name is Frieda Weeks. I work during the day as a cosmetic executive for Macy's. In my spare time, I'm in a not-for-profit cancer research economy if you cut the budget for the arts. You are cutting the arts. You are cutting the life achieving dreams that few people ever did. Auditioning and being called...
Weeks
1 City. As Mr. Sieling said, we participated in the symphony, the opera, Red House, talent companies. I can't name the theatre companies and the arts that we've supported because of that one audition in 1994 that ended up changing our families life forever. We were the ones coming home at midnight with our kids from rehearsal, and yes, they had to go to school the next day. But we were a family of four who found an activity that we all did together. And which found other families who did those activities too that remain as extended family to us and some who are on the board of our foundation in memory of our daughter.

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

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

Schmeling
1 Maurice Yotson? And Rodney Sanford.
2 Then behind them then is Carol Christiansen and David Barbosa.
3 Mr. Schmeling?
4 KURT SCHMELING: That was my dad, I'm Kurt. I notice this one flavor here would rather I wasn't here, but that seems to be the same problem we have with the city of Syracuse with them. Because we had six percent increase in property taxes there because the mayor didn't want to eliminate the $6 million out of the $13 million of overtime in the city budget. So we got a 6 percent tax increase in the city of Syracuse. I really wouldn't want to see that happen with the people on the Legislature here as it did in the city.

Now some of these people that feel that way have never heard Chris Collins talk, who is the executive for the Erie County. And one of things that he uses, and he's a very tough executive, he says Number 1, do we need it? Number 2, can we afford it? And Number 3, will it make our citizens lives better? I think we need to apply that to what we do when we look at our budget here.

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

Senior citizens have not seen an increase in their Social Security in two years because according to the federal government we have no inflation. Now somewhere along the line somebody is not telling the truth. Because the cost...
Christiansen
along with my father and my brother. We also began in Jesus Christ Superstar. It was a passion for my then brother nine years old and my father who had, both had wonderful voices. It wasn't until about twenty years ago when I introduced theatre to my own four children that it became a passion for me. It also became a second home and an extended family. I became a costumer and production stages manager for many productions with several different companies throughout Central New York. But mostly I stayed with Salt City Center. My four children became actors and film operator and stagehands. They loved the work, the challenge and the reward of a show well done. But I think they appreciate mostly they felt at home there, they felt accepted, appreciated and they were learning skills that they could use for life long and maybe in a career later on. Like my brother did, who is now field engineer at CNN with

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

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

VICE CHAIR CORBETT: Dave Barbosa.
CHAIRMAN JORDAN: This is the final call for anyone who wishes to speak tonight. If you could come up and sign in if you want to speak. Thank you.

DAVID BARBOSA: Hi, my name is David Barbosa, I'm a cook for the county. I'd like to start by informing everybody who may not know that out of the fourteen employees with the cooks too and staff and management eight of them are military currently, they are retired, and there are also some have completed at least a minimum of one term. These are some of the employees who will be losing our jobs if the new company which is coming in takes over for us.

I'd like to also mention that this company is not a New York State company. So we will now be giving jobs to companies that, this one is based out of Philly. I don't see how that can help at all. I would like to let you know that our company has done $1.3 million worth of business with local vendors. This is money that you will be taking away. The company coming in, they do not do business with our local vendors, so we'll be losing our jobs and there will be local vendors losing a lot of
money by losing us. The company coming in, they have proposed a plan of 94 cents per meal. They are currently in Monroe County and they are doing it for 1.14. I think this just proves that they are making a low ball statement to get into the county, and there is no chance that they're going to be able to keep this number as they can't currently do it where they are right now.

I'd also like to mention that their menu is not up to the minimum New York State, our menu is. So we are competing against a company who can make cheaper food and have a cheaper menu because their standards aren't up to what our standards are currently being held up to.

I'd also like to mention that our food service managers with a college background and a military background, they proposed a $275,000 cost savings by proposing a new menu, which is something that has yet to be looked at. We tried to put that into play and it just, for some reason, hasn't really been taken seriously. So we don't necessarily need to lose all the cooks, we can just figure out ways to make the menu cheaper, which we have, and we could all keep our jobs and the county can have a little bit of help with the budget cut. I just would like to make it brief and let you know that there are several of us, we live here, I currently am and also a volunteer at the Apulia Fire Department. We have members of the cook staff who are volunteers at church; we're family men, family women. We would like to keep our jobs, we would like to keep in the county. We have gotten this position by having to have a minimum of five years large scale cooking. That's why a lot of us are military. I cooked on submarines. I'm currently in the United States Naval Reserves, I just come back from doing a tour in Korea, I've done a tour in Africa, and I have another member sitting out here just came back from the desert as well.

These are the people that work for the county, these are the people we're fighting to try to keep employed with the county. We do a very good job and we are more than willing to work with you to make cuts to help out the budget. But we are not willing to give up our jobs. So thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN JORDAN: Thank you very much, if there are no other public comments I'm declaring the comment period to be closed. If there are comments or closing remarks by any members of the Ways and Means Committee, now is the time to make your comments or remarks. Okay, I'm hereby declaring this Committee meeting closed.

[Conclusion of Meeting at 10:34 pm]
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

ADOPTED
SEP 07 2010

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. Matusc
CLERK, COUNTY LEGISLATURE
ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK

FILED WITH CLERK
ONON. CO. LEG.
Aug 12, 2010
10:44 AM 8:25
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.
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.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advertiser: COUNTY LEGISLATURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference #: 0000227232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product: Post-Standard-Full Run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start Date: 09/29/2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End Date: 09/29/2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insertions: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run Dates: 09/29/2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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: 09/29/13

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 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).
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
September 28, 2010

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

Dear Ms. Deborah Maturo,

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.

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

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

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

David C. Holder            
President
Syracuse CVB
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
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.

### Hotel Industry Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Travel Spending (in millions)</td>
<td>$719,504</td>
<td>$747,299</td>
<td>$776,903</td>
<td>$715,632</td>
<td>-7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Employment</td>
<td>13,285</td>
<td>13,574</td>
<td>11,778</td>
<td>11,613</td>
<td>-1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Taxes Generated (in millions)</td>
<td>$88,258</td>
<td>$104,547</td>
<td>$129,324</td>
<td>$97,775</td>
<td>-25.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Taxpayer Savings

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

### Unique Visitors to VisitSyracuse.org

- August 31, 2009: 89,980
- August 31, 2010: 80,837

### Facebook Fans

- August 31, 2009: 4,200
- August 31, 2010: 6,976

### Twitter Followers

- August 31, 2009: 500
- August 31, 2010: 1,198

### Delivering Results — Marketing

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:

- **Facebook**:
  - **Fans**: Decrease of 7%
  - **August 31, 2009**: 4,200
  - **August 31, 2010**: 6,976
  - **Increase of 66%**

- **Twitter**:
  - **Followers**: Increase of 139%
  - **August 31, 2009**: 500
  - **August 31, 2010**: 1,198
**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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room Nights</td>
<td>36,342</td>
<td>80,293</td>
<td>9,355</td>
<td>2,715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Travel Spending</td>
<td>$67.1 million</td>
<td>$83.5 million</td>
<td>$27.8 million</td>
<td>$3.45 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Still Pending Business Prospects (Tentatives)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room Nights</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>12,789</td>
<td>11,046</td>
<td>9,258</td>
<td>6,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Travel Spending</td>
<td>$522,400</td>
<td>$14.4 million</td>
<td>$7.9 million</td>
<td>$14 million</td>
<td>$4.4 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Look Who’s Coming in 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Estimated Travel Spending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NYS Vegetable Growers Association</td>
<td>Oncenter</td>
<td>$1.3 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Olympics — NY</td>
<td>Oncenter/County Parks</td>
<td>$730,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYS Skills</td>
<td>NYS Fairgrounds</td>
<td>$2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syracuse Nationals</td>
<td>NYS Fairgrounds</td>
<td>$13 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King of Trucks</td>
<td>NYS Fairgrounds</td>
<td>$5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USBC Women’s Championship</td>
<td>Oncenter</td>
<td>$45 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)</td>
<td>Holiday Inn Liverpool</td>
<td>$2.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.A.S. S. Open Championship</td>
<td>County Parks</td>
<td>$2.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amateur Softball Association</td>
<td>Hopkins Road Park</td>
<td>$325,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Research Inc. Vital Signs Conference</td>
<td>Oncenter</td>
<td>$3.2 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### $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**

- Green
- Trade/Business
- Hobbies
- Environmental
- Religious
- Education
- Medical (conferences; seminars)
- Technical/Engineering
- Sports (extreme; traditional; youth)

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
“Forging Our Community: United Strength”

CHARLOTTE (CHUCKIE) HOLSTEIN
Executive Director

City Hall Common
201 E. Washington Stree
Syracuse, New York 13202-143
(315) 448-8732 • Fax 448-873
E-Mail: focus@ci.syracuse.ny
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”.

  o 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
  o 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
  o 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.
  o 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 years, of county and town vehicles. At
ight hundred to fifteen hundred per tow, it makes no sense to sell

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 then
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
tough problems. Let me ask you how contracting out the OnCenter
~ worked for us? Mismanagement of money has lead to more over

2
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 then 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 no 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 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
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.
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,
  o from building a home,
  o to implementing a community-wide marketing campaign,
  o to adopting poverty-ridden schools,
  o 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!
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,

Donald D. Fittipaldi
115 Hawthorne Drive
Camillus, NY 13031
(315) 487-2326
dfittipa@twcnry.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 of 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
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
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 overruled 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 stress 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 keeping 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 adding 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 to 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.
October 7, 2010

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

and Raul Pinet, 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..." 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

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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 RFP\(^5\) 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...” 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 an 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.” 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.

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6 RFP, 7.2.7.1.7.
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 experienced 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 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 of 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.

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State Affiliate of the ACLU
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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.

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.

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Barrie Gewanter  
Director – Central New York Chapter of the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU)  
NY State Affiliate of the ACLU
RE: ONONDAGA FY2011 PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING 7:00 PM OCTOBER 7, 2010
ONONDAGA COUNTY GOV’T COUNTY SEAT SYRACUSE, NEW YORK 132XX
CC: BUCKEL-ONGOV 7TH LEG- & MY REP.!
RHINEHART, ONGOV LEG-CHR
ANTONACCI, CPA-COUNTY COMPT’L
MATURO, ACCTG
SQUIRES, AUDITG
CALOGERO, GOV’T ACCTNT
ROWLEY, ONGOV CFO
SEITZ, ONGOV BUDGT/ADMIN
OPEN LETTER
PART OF REVIEW FROM: TOM E. LAW 152 CHATHAM ROAD
CITIZEN OF 13203
STATEMENT:
NO FORMAL TABLE OF COMPARITIVE PEER COUNTY BUDGETS IS HANDY OR HAS BEEN SELECTED.
THUS I SUGGEST IS DUE FOR FUTURE USE & OFFER A SCHEME OF SELECTION AS FOLLOWS:
-----OVERALL-----CHOOSE SIX PLUS OUR OWN ONONDAGA { MAKING SEVEN ON THE TABLE-SHEET } ---

<table>
<thead>
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<th>ONONDAGA COUNTY ANNUAL BUDGET</th>
<th>= THE LOCAL TAX / PUBLIC COSTS REPORT</th>
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<td>+ NC-GREENSBORO’S COUNTY</td>
<td>( AS RETIREE ATTRACTOR COUNTY OF A LOW TAX STATE )</td>
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<td>+ CHOICE:</td>
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<td>&amp;</td>
<td>+ ONE FROM CHILE [ RATIONALE - ~9 YR AUSTERITY UNTOGROWTH RESULTS LEADER ]</td>
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<td>+ TWO FROM ASIA</td>
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<td>+ ONE FROM AFRICA</td>
<td>- AN EMERGING MARKET AS A MODEL OF CHANGE &amp; STRUGGLE</td>
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= 7 PEERS

Q.? WHY BOTHER WITH THIS? ANS. IT ADDS GLOBAL CONTEXT; ELEMENTS OF BROADER ANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE; DYNAMICS OF PUBLIC STYLES OF COSTING; VARIETY OF LINE ITEM ENTRIES; KEY QUESTIONS OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT FOCUSED DISCUSSION LOOKING FORWARD THREE TO TEN YEARS; POINTS TO UNDERLYING" POLITICAL ECONOMY” PHILOSOPHY AT LEAST IN THE ALPHABETIC WORLD OF PLANNING.

ILE: ONONDAGA FY2011PUB-HRG-OCT7—REVIEW.DOC

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CITIZEN OF  13203

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**RE: ONONDAGA FY2011 PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING 7:00 PM OCTOBER 7, 2010**  
ONONDAGA COUNTY GOV’T COUNTY SEAT  SYRACUSE, NEW YORK 132XX  
CC: BUCKEL-ONGOV 7TH LEG- & MY REP.! RHINEHART, ONGOV LEG-CHR  
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# #
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 downtown, 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.
Deb:

No problem. Call me when you are heading over. I will meet you there. 530-3583. This is just to confirm, Commissioner Lynch just received a call from Assistant Chief Gratien; there will be an eight man detail. Lieutent, Sergeant, and six deputies. Call should you need anything else in advance. Take care.

John E. Heisler, III, Director of Security
Onondaga County Department of Facilities Management
County Office Building
600 South State Street
Syracuse, New York 13202
(315) 435-3451
(315) 435-3789 (facsimile)
(315) 530-3583 (BlackBerry)
johnheisleriii@ongov.net

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