



Media Release

Monroe County Democratic Caucus

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For Immediate Release
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County Democrats Renew Call for Independent Investigation into Malfeasance at the MCWA

Rochester, New York – June 24, 2007. Democrats in the Monroe County Legislature are renewing their call for the abolition of the scandal-ridden Monroe County Water Authority and a full county legislature investigation after the New York State Comptroller's release Friday of an audit of the Authority revealing a potential conflict of interest and violation of state law.

"Grave accusations have been leveled at the MCWA," said Minority Leader **Carla Palumbo**, "including those of criminal conduct, yet we still do not know the facts because the Legislature, whose job it is to oversee the MCWA, has not conducted *any* investigation. The recently release 'special counsel' report came from the counsel to the Water Authority itself, and was in no way responsible to the County Legislature or the people of Monroe County. Until the Republican majority takes their oversight responsibility seriously and joins in our call for an independent investigation, we have no way to verify that the broader issues of abuse of power have been resolved."

Last August, after the Comptroller released an audit revealing that the MCWA had paid six employees nearly \$500,000 in unearned pay and benefits, with former Monroe County GOP chairman John Stanwix in his role as MCWA Executive Director receiving the lion's share. Democrats called for a legislature investigation of the MCWA, the resignation of three of the Authority's board members, and the reorganization of the Board to comply with the bipartisan intent of state law. All measures were defeated by the Republican led legislature.

The New York State Comptroller's audit released Friday revealed that Stanwix, may have illegally benefited from a \$30,000 contract between Clark Patterson Associates and the MCWA. The double-dipping conflict prompted the Comptroller's Office to refer the matter to the Monroe County District's Attorney's Office for further investigation.

In May of this year, Democrats introduced legislation calling on the state to abolish the MCWA. "These types of shadowy authorities really have no place in government," said Legislator **Travis Heider (D-Brighton)**, the Democrat's non-voting liaison to the MCWA. "There are just too many unanswered questions for the Authority to remain credible. Now is the time to abolish the MCWA."

For more information: www.Democraticledger.org

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