



Media Release

Monroe County Democratic Caucus

Monroe County Office Building
39 West Main Street, 4th Floor, Rm. 408
Rochester, NY 14614
P 585-753-1940 F 585-753-1946

For Immediate Release

Contact: Joe Rittler Phone: 753-1910 or 409-1894

Democrats Welcome Brooks New Position on MCC Search

Rochester, New York – May 23, 2008. Democrats in the Monroe County Legislature expressed disappointment that the County's top Republican failed to speak out in time to salvage the previous search for the next President of Monroe Community College. Democrats also welcomed County Executive Maggie Brooks' announcement today that Trustees who can not place their political agendas aside should resign from the Monroe Community College Board of Trustees.

Democrats have repeatedly called for an end to the political interference that has created a divisive, deadlocked search process. The political interference first became an issue on February 4 when Richard Guon, treasurer of the Monroe County Water Authority, replaced Lori Van Dusen as the Chair of MCC's Board of Trustees. The Student Trustee, faculty members and other community leaders expressed concern that Guon may have been installed to sway the Presidential search in favor of former Republican Majority Leader of the County Legislature Bill Smith.

After a thorough search, the two independent search committees—established by the Trustees when Van Dusen was Chair—recommended two candidates as finalists. To the great concern of virtually the entire community, the Board of Trustees, now under Guon's leadership, chose to add two names to the recommended list of finalists: Bill Smith and Dennis Kessler. The Trustees claimed their rationale for adding the names was that local candidates should be considered, despite the fact that both search committees interviewed Smith and Kessler but did not recommend them.

Assistant Democratic Leader Carrie Andrews (D-Rochester) said, "It's disappointing that this County's top Republican official chose to speak out at a time when the damage has already been done, but we are nonetheless grateful that County Executive Brooks has finally come to realize this search was unacceptably tainted by politics. That being said, it is unfortunate that Ms. Brooks failed to realize the fatal damage done to the search when the Trustees diverted from the established process and included and ultimately recommended Mr. Smith. The Board had established a credible process, but that process was disregarded with the inclusion of Mr. Smith, who failed to meet even the basic essential qualification for this position."

"Building consensus is going to be critical as this process continues to unfold, but consensus does not mean only one's political allies. I would sincerely hope that all leaders in our community appreciate the importance of true consensus building, which in this case means selecting a candidate who is acceptable to the faculty, staff and students at MCC, as well as entire College community. Clearly, Bill Smith does not meet this goal of a consensus candidate," Andrews added.

###