

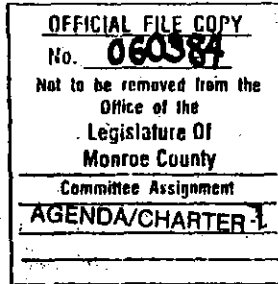


Monroe County Legislature

C. STEPHEN ECKEL

LEGISLATOR - DISTRICT 26

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November 13, 2006

To The Honorable
Monroe County Legislature
39 West Main Street
Rochester, New York 14614

Re: **Amending Section 545-26, Article VI of the Rules of the Legislature of the County of Monroe to Establish Consistent Accounting Practices for Grant Appropriations**

Honorable Legislators:

For the past year, referrals including the acceptance of grant funding and subsequent appropriation in the County Budget have been unclear and inconsistent. Considering the critical impact state and federal grants have on the formulation of the operating budget, it is important that each dollar received is accounted for in full.

In referral #05-0399, adopted at the full legislative session on December 13, 2005, the County Executive was authorized to accept a grant for \$90,300 for the HIV Seroprevalence Program, but only \$48,829 of the grant was appropriated into account 001-058-2046. This left \$41,471 in unaccounted dollars.

At the full legislative session on February 14, 2006, two referrals were adopted authorizing the County Executive to accept additional grant funding. Referral 06-0025 accepted \$237,500 for the Consolidated Child and Family Health Program, and appropriated \$225,000 to fund 9300, funds center 5805010000. Referral 06-0026 accepted \$376,875 for the Safe Start Demonstration Initiative Program, and appropriated \$305,722 into fund 9300, funds center 5803030000. Combined, these actions left \$83,653 in unaccounted dollars. The reason given was that the unaccounted funds were used for administrative costs.

More recently, referral #06-0329 authorized the County Executive to accept a grant for \$6,923,275, and appropriated only \$224,264 into fund 9001, funds center 5103060000. This left \$6,699,011 in unaccounted for dollars, and when the Administration was asked about the appropriation of these funds, they stated that the monies had already been appropriated into the County Budget through its initial adoption.

As legislators, it is our job to oversee the County Budget. We should not have to assume or guess where grant funds are going to be deposited. Certainly, establishing more consistent accounting practices for grant appropriations would improve the line of communication between the Administration and legislators, and provide this Honorable Body with important budget details, leaving less to question.

Therefore, we request that this Honorable Body amend Section 545-26, Article VI of the Rules of the Legislature of the County of Monroe, establishing a procedure requiring all submitted referrals to include detailed appropriations, including all account and fund numbers, of grant funds and grants of additional funding for which the County Executive is seeking authorization. Adopting this process will ensure open communications within county government, and allow for more informed decision-making by this Honorable Body. Such amendment would read as follows:

"B. All local laws, resolutions, communications and petitions submitted to the Legislature for consideration shall include within their text a statement as to the fiscal impact such items would have on the revenues or expenses, or both, of the budget of Monroe County, as well as the value of any resources required to study or determine the feasibility of enacting each such item. All account or fund numbers receiving grant monies, including portions that may have been previously appropriated, shall be identified and all intergovernmental fund transfers shall also be accounted for in the text of local laws, resolutions, communications and petitions submitted to the legislature. In the event that there is no fiscal impact, the same shall be stated."

This action shall have no impact on the 2006 Monroe County Budget, achieved through current personnel and resources. Please forward this matter to the appropriate committee(s) for favorable action.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Democratic Leader

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