

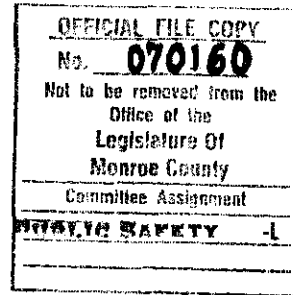


Monroe County Legislature

WILLIE J. LIGHTFOOT
LEGISLATOR - DISTRICT 27

WILLIE J. LIGHTFOOT
LEGISLATOR - DISTRICT 27
14 TRAFALGAR STREET
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14619
OFFICE: (585) 753-1940
HOME: (585) 436-1015
E-MAIL: kecpaul@rochester.rr.com

May 7, 2007



To the Honorable
Monroe County Legislature
407 County Office Building
39 West Main Street
Rochester, New York 14614

Re: Official Inquiry into Claims of Misconduct at the Monroe County Jail

Honorable Legislators:

A recent report produced by a local television station revealed startling allegations made against several Monroe County sheriff and jail employees in a 2004 complaint filed by Mr. Thomas Zembiec, a sergeant in the Monroe County Sheriff's Department. The shocking allegations included claims of circulated racist emails, drug use, falsified payroll records and even allowing an inmate to smuggle a knife into the jail in a pizza box.

The thought that racism, retaliation, physical threats and other forms of despicable misconduct may have occurred within the Monroe County Sheriff's Department is unconscionable. Certainly, we have prided ourselves on the fact that Monroe County has consistently maintained a highly professional and well trained team of law enforcement officials, each of whom has taken a pledge to serve and protect our community and its citizens.

In February 2006, the County Legislature authorized the settlement of a lawsuit entitled "Thomas Zembiec vs. County of Monroe, et al." The proposed settlement was recommended to us by counsel retained by the County. The financial terms of the settlement were disclosed in the recent television news report. Based on information the reporter received from the County Administration, the settlement cost the county nearly half a million dollars in back pay and legal fees. Furthermore, Sgt. Zembiec in addition to receiving a \$200,000 settlement from the County is also still on the payroll, even though he hasn't reported to work in over one year.

I find the allegations contained in the news report extremely troubling and believe their severity warrants Legislature scrutiny. This report has compromised the reputation of the Monroe County Sheriff's Department. I urge this Honorable body to act swiftly and responsibly regarding this

matter and therefore request that the Public Safety Committee immediately conduct an official inquiry into the shocking allegations contained in the report. I request that the County Administration provide comprehensive access to the provisions of the settlement and also to the results of the internal investigation of the allegations as conducted by the Sheriff's Department. The requested information should be presented to the Public Safety Committee publicly or via executive session, if warranted, by the July 30, 2007 committee meeting.

This proposal shall have no impact on the 2007 Monroe County Budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Willie J. Lightfoot
Willie J. Lightfoot
Legislator - District 27

Calvin Lee, Jr.
Calvin Lee, Jr.
Assistant Democratic Leader

Harry B. Bronson
Harry B. Bronson
Assistant Democratic Leader

Travis R. Heider
Travis R. Heider
Legislator - District 14

C. Stephen Eckel
C. Stephen Eckel
Legislator - District 26