

**News from the Rensselaer County Legislature
Office of the Minority 270-2892**

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Democratic Minority Legislators Commend DiNapoli for Launch of *Open Book New York*

Troy—The Democratic Minority members of the Rensselaer County Legislature filed a resolution commending NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli for launching the website *Open Book New York* (<http://www.osc.state.ny.us/openbook>) earlier this summer. The website provides New York taxpayers with a tool to better understand the workings of government and instant access to information about how their tax dollars are being spent.

“We believe ‘transparency in government’ is a vital part of responsible government,” stated Legislator Flora Fasoldt. “These are not just buzz words to be used by campaigning politicians. Good government is based on the free flow of information and an informed public. As a county legislator, I know how important it is to have access to information from government agencies to fulfill my responsibilities to my constituents—and understand the frustration of having access limited.”

“The internet has revolutionized the way information is stored and transmitted. It’s helping us move toward ‘open government’ by getting information that used to be buried in government records out to peoples’ desktop computers,” added Legislator Peter Grimm. Having electronic access to records is easier, faster and saves tons of paper.”

Fasoldt commended DiNapoli stating, “*Open Book New York* establishes a new framework for making detailed information available to the public. The future is promising for taxpayers to have easy access to records from local governments, public authorities and school districts.”

A 2008 study by the Association of Government Accountants demonstrates the public’s profound dissatisfaction with the availability and accuracy of government financial information at every level of government—federal, state and local. *Open Book New York* provides records of 60,000 active State contracts as well as spending data for 113 State agencies and public authorities. Visitors to the website can identify who’s doing business with the State and ascertain State agencies’ disbursements in categories such as travel, employee salaries and consultants.