

News Alert

Rensselaer County Legislature Office of the Minority 270-2892

July 28, 2008

Politics vs. Taxpayer \$'s

Troy—The County Legislature is entrusted with the “power of the purse strings.” That means that our job is to decide whether or not to approve the spending of County tax dollars.

In July, we were asked to approve the renewal of a 5-year \$3 million lease on the Raddock Building in Downtown Troy for the County’s Department of Social Services. In investigating this proposal, we learned the following:

- The lease had not been put out for competitive bid, as is often done to make sure services are provided at the lowest cost and without favoritism.
- The estimated lease cost of \$17.50/square foot was higher than comparable space in downtown Troy.
- Employees had concerns about the poor condition of this building. We visited the building to verify that the building is not well maintained.

Based on these concerns, all six Democratic legislators joined a number of Republicans and voted to table this matter to allow for its further review. The question that legislators now must answer is simple: Is the Raddock Building lease at a cost \$17.50/square foot a good deal for Rensselaer County taxpayers?

Unfortunately, a number of Republican legislators have chosen to play politics instead of doing their jobs. They have fabricated issues (in plain English – lied) in an attempt to distract the public. No one is suggesting that the Department of Social Services needs to move, but shouldn’t we expect that the County will negotiate with its landlord to get the best price? Shouldn’t we make sure the building is well maintained? Unfortunately, in their effort to prevent others from getting any credit, Legislators Reid, Mirch and some of their Republican colleagues have put politics ahead of the interests of taxpayers. Maybe this is why County taxes have skyrocketed under their leadership.

If you don’t know who to believe, don’t take our word, see for yourself. Visit the Raddock Building and let us know if you think top dollar for this facility is a good use of your taxes. You can also attend the Legislature’s Social Services Committee meeting Monday afternoon August 4th or the monthly meeting of the Legislature Tuesday evening August 12th. Feel free to contact us at 270-2891 or at www.rensselaercountygov.com. It’s your money and we work for you.

Legislators Ginny O’Brien, Keith Hammond, Flora Fasoldt, Peter Grimm, Kevin Harrington and Brian Zweig