

# News Alert

## Rensselaer County Legislature Office of the Minority 270-2892

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### Another Rensselaer County GOP No-Bid Contract

**Troy**— County Legislator Peter Grimm (District 1 – Troy) voiced concern after learning that the Rensselaer County Legislature’s Education Committee will not be meeting this month on Monday as previously scheduled. Grimm, who sits on the Education Committee, is particularly disturbed that the resolution presented by the Republican Majority last month authorizing a \$985,000 contract to U.W. Marx will not be discussed in committee.

The contract awarding a construction project management position at Hudson Valley Community College to U.W. Marx was not put out for bid. The resolution to authorize that contract was defeated at the July Legislative Meeting when it failed to garner the ten votes necessary for approval. Minority Democrats voted against the resolution, citing concerns over the absence of a competitive bidding process. Due to two absences and two conflicts of interest, four Republican Legislators were unable to cast votes and the resolution was defeated.

The Majority filed the same resolution again this month and assigned it to the Education Committee for discussion. However, on Thursday afternoon, days after the resolution was filed by the Republican Majority, they withdrew the resolution from the August 12 Legislative session schedule. “It was disappointing that the committee meeting was cancelled thereby denying us the opportunity to discuss this proposal in detail and to address the issue we raised last month, namely, ‘Why were no bids sought on a \$1 million contract?’” commented Grimm.

Minority Democrats believe the Majority would prefer to avoid the issue altogether to prevent a potentially controversial issue from coming to the public’s attention. “Last month the Majority was caught off-guard when the Democrats blocked two costly no bid contracts,” added Legislator Kevin Harrington, “and now they’ve cancelled the Education Committee meeting in the hopes that the issue will die without any further discussion.”

The Minority contends that the Republicans’ unwillingness to address the U.W. Marx no-bid contract stems from the recent scrutiny they faced after Democratic Legislators raised questions about the County’s \$3 million renewal of the lease at the Raddock Building, another instance where the bidding process was not utilized.

Although a resolution usually must be approved by the appropriate committee before it can pass the Legislature, there is a strong possibility that the Marx contract will be adopted at this month’s meeting. Neil Kelleher, the Chairman of the Legislature, has the authority to introduce the resolution as a “late file” and bypass the committee process altogether. Given the controversial nature of the contract, it is likely that the Committee meeting was canceled to deny Democrats an opportunity to question why County Republicans continue to offer companies such as U.W. Marx large no-bid contracts.