



Rensselaer County Legislature

OFFICE of the MINORITY

Ginny O'Brien, Minority Leader
Keith A. Hammond, Deputy Minority Leader

District 1
Peter D. Grimm

District 2
Keith A. Hammond
Kevin Harrington
Ginny O'Brien
Brian S. Zweig

District 4
Flora Fasoldt

August 13, 2008

Letter to the Editor:

Status Quo is OK for GOP

Why, when the Rensselaer County Legislature had a golden opportunity to renegotiate a 5-year lease at the Raddock Building for the Dept of Social Services did the Republican controlled Majority decide that what already existed was good enough and should be protected?

Is it good enough when a 5-year lease totaling over \$3 million dollars is renewed, as County Executive Jimino stated, "...without fanfare?"

Is it good enough when our requests to look at the purported "in-depth" review that was done for alternative space was repeatedly ignored?

Is it good enough when a Request for Proposals (standard practice in good government) was never done?

Our main function as legislators is to act as stewards of the overburdened taxpayers' money. The Democratic Minority, having raised questions about the lease at the July meeting, succeeded to have the action tabled for one month. At the August meeting, the same resolution was brought back for a vote. In the intervening month, a letter describing "filth and overall deplorable working conditions" at the Raddock Building was received from UPSEU (the union representing County employees). In addition, a spokesperson from the Union appeared at this month's meeting to document these conditions and to ask the County to seek relief for its employees. With their 13 votes to pass the lease renewal resolution, the GOP majority ignored these pleas and said "Yes" to the status quo.

As a Legislative body, we have failed to exercise our fiduciary responsibilities as stewards of taxpayer finances. When the status quo becomes the benchmark for a missed opportunity, sadly, we all pay the price!!

Ginny O'Brien
Minority Leader
Rensselaer County Legislature
210-5877