

Center for Judicial Accountability

From: Center for Judicial Accountability <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Friday, April 25, 2014 12:19 PM
To: 'petr.svab@epochtimes.com'; 'ivan.penchukov@epochtimes.com'
Cc: 'nyc_news@epochtimes.com'
Subject: TIME-SENSITIVE NEWS LEAD: The Public Fights Back in a Lawsuit vs Commission to Investigate Public Corruption

TO: EPOCH TIMES/Petr Svab & Ivan Pentchoukov –

As you have each written important articles about the “Public” and the Commission to Investigate Public Corruption, I’d like to give you the lead on a HUGE, BREAKING STORY: On April 23rd, the “Public” brought an order to show cause to intervene in a lawsuit vs the Commission, to be argued this Monday, April 28th, at 2:15 pm in courtroom 222 before Justice Alice Schlesinger.

The order to show cause – both its moving affidavit and proposed complaint – chronicle the Commission’s wilful and deliberate violation of its obligations to the “Public” under the very Executive Order that created it—reflective of the fact that the Commission was a “front” for a corrupt Governor and Attorney General, who it “protected” from investigation.

Representing the “Public” is myself – “Elena Sassower, individually and as Director of the Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc., acting on [my] own behalf and on behalf of the People of the State of New York & the Public Interest.” The April 23rd order to show cause is posted on the Center for Judicial Accountability’s website, www.judgewatch.org, accessible *via* a homepage hyperlink. Here it is, directly, <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/searching-nys/commission-to-investigate-public-corruption/holding-to-account/intervention-declaratory-judgment.htm> .

If you want to break this story, I will hold off contacting other reporters. Please let me hear from you by 3:30 pm.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
914-455-4373

September 17, 2013: “Public Blocked from Moreland Commission Hearing”, Ivan Pentchukov:
<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/290956-public-blocked-from-mooreland-commission-hearing/>

April 22, 2014: “Corruption Commission Dissolves With Little Public Notice”, Petr Svab:
<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/636147-corruption-commission-dissolves-with-little-public-notice/>

Corruption Commission Dissolves With Little Public Notice

By [Petr Svab](#), [Epoch Times](#) | April 22, 2014 | Last Updated: April 22, 2014 10:00 pm



NEW YORK—Even though most New Yorkers take issue with long-standing New York state government corruption, many didn't notice the rise and fall of Gov. Andrew Cuomo's biggest anti-corruption initiative: the Moreland Commission.

The commission was formed under the Moreland Act of 1907, which allows the governor "to examine and investigate the management and affairs of any department, board, bureau, or commission of the state."

Cuomo set up the commission in July last year to independently investigate adequacy and enforcement of bribery laws, campaign finance laws, lobbying laws, and election laws.

While 84 percent of New Yorkers considers corruption in Albany somewhat serious, or very serious, only 6 percent followed news about the Moreland Commission very closely, according to a Siena Research Institute poll released Tuesday.

The governor made fighting corruption a centerpiece of his agenda, but after just nine months of functioning, and only a preliminary report on the table, Cuomo shut the commission down on March 29, saying it is no longer needed since anti-corruption language was included in this year's budget law.

A week later, federal prosecutor Preet Bharara called disbandment of the commission premature. Last Thursday he took over a truckload of documents the commission generated, saying his people will continue the work.

Despite extensive media coverage, 41 percent of poll respondents answered they had heard nothing at all about the commission's disbanding.

Public Financing Reform

While this year's budget law reforms focus mostly on higher penalties for bribery and corruption, the real problem lies with practices that are actually legal, according to Ian Vandewalker, counsel at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law.

"There's a culture of corruption in Albany," he said. "A candidate can accept \$60,000 from an individual and then go and advocate for a road arm legislation that might help that individual, or that individual's industry make more money, or get a tax break."

The primary recommendation of the commission's report was to establish state public campaign financing, similar to the system in New York City, where campaign contributions from local residents are matched and multiplied with public money.

The system is costly. The city spent over \$100 million on matching funds over the past four election cycles.

But Vandewalker believes it would help to change the culture on the state level, as it did in the city. He used the example of police officers or teachers running competitive campaigns for city offices "without having \$2,000 a plate dinners."

Cuomo only included in the budget bill public campaign financing for the state comptroller election, a disappointing outcome for Vandewalker.

Over the past hundred years governors created about a dozen Moreland commissions. Cuomo created one in 2012 to investigate the use of money for Hurricane Sandy recovery. Before that, no Moreland commissions were formed for over two decades.

Cuomo's father, former Gov. Mario Cuomo, created the previous commission in 1987 to investigate campaign finance rules. The commission's recommendations at that time led to New York City's public campaign financing laws.

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Public Blocked From Moreland Commission Hearing

By [Ivan Pentchoukov](#), [Epoch Times](#) | September 17, 2013 | Last Updated: September 17, 2013
8:38 pm



NEW YORK—A public hearing on government corruption turned into a private, heavily guarded event just as people arrived at the doors.

The Moreland Commission to Investigate Public Corruption was to hold a hearing at Pace University in Lower Manhattan on Sept. 17, with the doors scheduled to open at 5 p.m.

The multipurpose room scheduled for the event can fit up to 350 people, according to New York attorney Jackson Chin, who has attended meetings in the venue with community groups. A Pace student said that the multipurpose room could fit about 300 people.

"They said that they prepared the room for 150 people, but I'm not sure which 150 they meant," Chin said. "That's upsetting to a lot of the people up front."

A representative with the commission said that only 150 chairs had been put out and the hearing audience was limited to that number of people.

Some people who registered to testify at the commission were also not permitted to enter.

A representative with the Moreland Commission said that those who did not register for the hearing would be let in as people inside the room leave.

The public notice for the hearing said that only those who want to testify should register.

A live broadcast of the public hearing on the state website had no sound, and some Internet users could not access the video at all.

A group of about 100 protesters arrived at 6:19 p.m. and was diverted to a barricaded area across the street.

"Shame. Shame. Shame," they chanted.

The police presence was heavy and officers were treating all parties considerately.

There were 40 officers outside the Pace University entrance as of 6:40 p.m., not counting plainclothes officers.

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