

## Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 31, 2017 6:30 AM  
**To:** 'diana.williams@abc.com'  
**Cc:** 'WePersist123@gmail.com'  
**Subject:** ELECTION ALERT: Putting an End to "Fake News": The Minimal, Superficial, & Misleading Reporting of the Race for Westchester County Executive  
**Attachments:** 8-10-17-open-ltr.pdf; 5-17-17-flyer-we-persist-forum.pdf; ballot-2016-stewart-cousins-buchwald.pdf; ballot-2016-latimer-buchwald.pdf; 4-7-17-email-chain-nyt-etc.pdf

**TO: Diana Williams/Reporter and Anchor, Channel 7 Eyewitness News at 5:00**  
**Chris J. Vlasto, Executive Producer, Good Morning America**  
**Heather Cabot, Author and Adjunct Professor, Columbia School of Journalism**  
**Taegan Goddard, Founder of PoliticalWire.com**  
**Lee Woodruff, Author, Writer and Contributor to CBS This Morning**

This follows up your participation on May 17, 2017, as panelists and moderator of the forum, in Westchester, "*Fake News, The First Amendment, and Democracy – A Panel Discussion on the Role of Media in Today's Political Environment*", sponsored by WE PERSIST, "a grassroots organization working to promote and protect democratic core values".

As you will recollect, the panel discussion concluded with an audience participation portion, where audience members could come to the microphone with comments and questions. I was one such audience member. Stepping back from the forum's focus, mostly on the presidential election of Donald Trump, I decried the lack of competitiveness in our elections – using a Westchester example with which, as Westchester residents, I assumed you would all be familiar: what the ballot looked like, last year, where, excepting the presidential race, candidates for key offices were running unopposed, or cross-endorsed by all party lines, or, where opposed, as for instance for U.S. Senate, actually facing no significant contest. I attributed this evisceration of our democracy to press reporting, citing, in particular, the failure of the press to examine the records in office of incumbents, who were then able to run, without challenge, for re-election or other and higher elective offices – and, if challenged, to nonetheless defeat their opponents.

Diana Williams took issue with what I was saying, giving, as an example, press reporting of incumbent New York City Mayor Bill DiBlasio. I countered with the Westchester equivalent – the race for Westchester county executive, where incumbent NYS Senator George Latimer was running for that highest Westchester office. Senator Latimer was in the audience – and I so-stated this, further asserting that his record, as a state senator, was one of corruption – and that had there been any press examination of his state senate record, he could not be running for county executive.

I do not recall the response of any panelist – other than Ms. Williams, who, notwithstanding the excellent comments she had made in the panel presentation portion of the program as to the need for journalists to "break out from the bubble" and "have coffee with someone with different views" – which I believe was her "take-away" from President Trump's upset electoral victory – publicly declined my publicly-stated request that we sit down together for "coffee" to discuss our differences.

Following the program, I approached Ms. Williams – and most, if not all, of you – reiterating what I had publicly-stated and furnishing, in substantiation, print-outs of an e-mail chain that should have peaked your interest – and concern – as it related to the NYS budget, which, as you know, is the purview and work-product of the governor and of state legislators, such as Senator Latimer. The top of the chain was my April 7, 2017 e-mail to New York Times Albany Bureau Chief Jesse McKinley entitled "WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER: How do you reconcile your reporting on the NYS budget with the NYS Constitution, Article VII, §§4, 5, 6 and Article III, §10?". Further down was an April 2, 2017 e-mail to the

Legislative Correspondents' Association Press entitled "BUDGET ALERT: Reconciling your budget reporting with the NYS Constitution – Citizen-Taxpayer Action: CJA v. Cuomo, et al. #5122-16", which concluded as follows:

"Should you not be demanding answers from the 'three men in a room' about how they reconcile their behind-closed-doors budget deal-making...[with the NYS Constitution]? How about demanding answers from other legislators, starting with those in leadership positions collecting the biggest lulus – as, for instance, Senate Minority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb, Independent Democratic Coalition leaders – and the chair and ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee – Senators Catharine Young and Liz Krueger – and the chair and ranking member of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee – Assemblyman Herman Farrell and Bob Oaks? I believe all are 'full-time' legislators.

**Most, if not all, will be running for re-election or higher office next year. Likewise, Governor Cuomo, Attorney General Schneiderman, & Comptroller DiNapoli. Shouldn't the press be informing New York voters of the treason to the New York State Constitution that each and every one of their elected constitutional officers in the state's legislature and executive branch is NOW committing with respect to the \$150-billion state budget?**

As always, I am available to answer questions, be interviewed, and to assist you to the max. As you know, CJA's website, [www.judgewatch.org](http://www.judgewatch.org), posts the substantiating evidentiary proof. The direct link to CJA's March 29<sup>th</sup> order to show cause for a preliminary injunction [in our citizen-taxpayer action against all these elected constitutional officers pertaining to the budget for fiscal year 2017-2018] – is here: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/searching-nys/budget/citizen-taxpayer-action/2016/9-2-16-osc-complaint/3-29-17-osc.htm>. ..." (underlining in the original, bold added).

How disappointing it was not to have received any follow-up from any of you – especially as, within days thereafter and spanning the next two months, Senator Latimer went on to receive, in addition to the Democratic Party line that he had secured on May 10<sup>th</sup>, the lines of four of NYS' recognized third parties -- the Independence Party, the Women's Equality Party, the Working Families Party, and, lastly, the Reform Party under Guardian Angels' founder and radio host, Curtis Sliwa. As to all these cross-endorsements, news reporting was minimal and media investigation essentially non-existent.

Attached is my August 10<sup>th</sup> OPEN LETTER to Reform Party Chair Sliwa entitled "***The NYS Reform Party of Curtis Sliwa MUST Rescind its Endorsement of, & Party Line to, Senator George Latimer for Westchester County Executive & the Other Parties Must Follow Suit – Unless they Deem Corruption in Office a Qualification***". It references my audience comments at the May 17<sup>th</sup> forum and, after laying out THE EVIDENCE of Senator Latimer's record of corruption in office, states:

"To enable the press to discharge its first amendment responsibilities to protect our democracy from such 'fake news' as their incessant reporting of polls, which, by their reporting, they rig, this e-mail will also be furnished to the journalists who participated at the May 17, 2017 panel discussion and heard my comments about Senator Latimer at that time – as well as to their fellow journalists covering New York State politics, beginning, of course, with local press." (at p. 6, underlining in the original).

How has the "local press" responded to this August 10<sup>th</sup> OPEN LETTER? I have not even received a call-back in response to my outreach. Particularly noteworthy is my outreach to the well-financed and staffed Gannett media giant which, as you know, in Westchester goes by the name Lohud.com, with daily newspapers on newsstands throughout the county, and which – like the New York Times – boasts an Albany Bureau. Below is my August 16<sup>th</sup> e-mail to its top local management and reporters – to which, like my predecessor August 11<sup>th</sup> e-mail to them, also below – I have received NO response. Such, I believe, proves the point I was making to you on May 17<sup>th</sup>. What do you think?

I now turn to you. Will you report – or at least use your vast connections to local, regional, and state journalists and media to secure reporting of the August 10<sup>th</sup> OPEN LETTER, which, by its content and referred-to EVIDENCE, neatly packaged in CJA’s citizen-taxpayer action against Governor Cuomo, the Legislature, Attorney General Schneiderman, Comptroller DiNapoli, and Chief Judge DiFiore, all posted on CJA’s website, [www.judgwatch.org](http://www.judgwatch.org), establishes what it accurately describes as a story that:

“will completely transform the 2017 race for Westchester county executive – and other presently non-competitive 2017 races, such as for district attorney in a host of counties. It will also blow open the 2018 races by ending the re-election prospects of Governor Cuomo, Attorney General Schneiderman, Comptroller DiNapoli, as likewise of incumbent legislative leaders and a huge swath of the rank and file legislators occupying the 53 state senate seats and 150 state assembly seats, ALL up for re-election next year.” (at p. 6)

Time is of the essence, with the primaries now less than two weeks away and the general election less than two months after that. Will you, individually or collectively, take the lead in apprising the public of what they most need to know about New York’s non-competitive and party-rigged elections involving incumbent candidates – in this year’s elections and looking ahead to next? What could be more important to our democracy?

I am available to assist you, to the max, beginning immediately and including during the upcoming holiday weekend, any time, day or night. Please let me hear from you, as soon as possible. For your convenience, here’s the direct link to CJA’s webpage for Senator Latimer’s run for Westchester county executive and to my August 10, 2017 OPEN LETTER: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/elections/ending-the-road-latimer.htm>. It is also accessible *via* the prominent link, “OUTING CORRUPT & COLLUSIVE INCUMBENTS & Ending their Road to Re-Election & Higher Office in 2017, 2018, & Beyond – WITH EVIDENCE”, which appears on CJA’s homepage, [www.judgewatch.org](http://www.judgewatch.org).

As I was unable to get e-mail addresses from any but Ms. Williams, who gave me her e-mail address reluctantly, I am sending this e-mail to her, with a request that she furnish it to the others. I am also sending it to the generic e-mail address for WE PERSIST, the organizers of the May 17<sup>th</sup> forum, with a similar request for distribution.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director  
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)  
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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) [<mailto:elena@judgewatch.org>]  
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**To:** 'mlungariel@lohud.com' <[mlungariel@lohud.com](mailto:mlungariel@lohud.com)>; 'tbauer@lohud.com' <[tbauer@lohud.com](mailto:tbauer@lohud.com)>; 'mdolan@lohud.com' <[mdolan@lohud.com](mailto:mdolan@lohud.com)>; 'fscandale@lohud.com' <[fscandale@lohud.com](mailto:fscandale@lohud.com)>; 'metro@lohud.com' <[metro@lohud.com](mailto:metro@lohud.com)>; 'jbandler@lohud.com' <[jbandler@lohud.com](mailto:jbandler@lohud.com)>; 'jfitzgib@lohud.com' <[jfitzgib@lohud.com](mailto:jfitzgib@lohud.com)>; 'dwilson3@lohud.com' <[dwilson3@lohud.com](mailto:dwilson3@lohud.com)>; 'ceberhart@lohud.com' <[ceberhart@lohud.com](mailto:ceberhart@lohud.com)>; 'jfusco@lohud.com' <[jfusco@lohud.com](mailto:jfusco@lohud.com)>; 'elgarcia@lohud.com' <[elgarcia@lohud.com](mailto:elgarcia@lohud.com)>; 'rliebson@lohud.com' <[rliebson@lohud.com](mailto:rliebson@lohud.com)>; 'mmckinney@lohud.com' <[mmckinney@lohud.com](mailto:mmckinney@lohud.com)>; 'dreiner@lohud.com' <[dreiner@lohud.com](mailto:dreiner@lohud.com)>; 'mspillane@lohud.com' <[mspillane@lohud.com](mailto:mspillane@lohud.com)>; 'jspector@gannett.com' <[jspector@gannett.com](mailto:jspector@gannett.com)>; 'jcampbell1@gannett.com' <[jcampbell1@gannett.com](mailto:jcampbell1@gannett.com)>  
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**Subject: "OVERLOOKED"? -- FOLLOW-UP: "Latimer endorsed by the party Astorino started: Incumbent Rob Astorino will seek to steal the line back in a write-in primary in September" (8/7/17-Mark Lungariello/Gannett/lohud.com)**

As I have received NO response from Mark Lungariello – or ANY of the many indicated Gannett/LoHud recipients – to my below August 11<sup>th</sup> e-mail pertaining to the 2017 electoral race for Westchester county executive, I am resending it, in the event it was “overlooked” by all.

Please advise as to whether Westchester’s premier, funded and staffed news outlet will be furnishing its Westchester readership with an investigative story – or any story, for that matter – and, if not, why not. So that President and Publisher George Troyano can undertake appropriate oversight of the situation, this e-mail is also being sent to him, in advance of my telephoning his office, which I will do shortly.

For your convenience, the direct link to the webpage for my attached August 10, 2017 OPEN LETTER to the political parties and candidates for Westchester county executive is here: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/elections/2017/8-10-17-open-ltr.htm>.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director  
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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) [<mailto:elena@judgewatch.org>]

**Sent:** Friday, August 11, 2017 6:12 PM

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**Subject: FOLLOW-UP: "Latimer endorsed by the party Astorino started: Incumbent Rob Astorino will seek to steal the line back in a write-in primary in September" (8/7/17-Mark Lungariello/Gannett/lohud.com)**

**TO: Mark Lungariello/Gannett-lohud.com**

Your August 7, 2017 article “*Latimer endorsed by the party Astorino started*”, with the provocative subtitle “*Incumbent Rob Astorino will seek to steal the line back in a write-in primary in September*”, updated on August 8, 2017: <http://www.lohud.com/story/news/politics/elections/2017/08/07/reform/537871001/>, makes it appear that Senator Latimer rightfully enjoys the endorsement of the Reform Party. You quote Reform Party Chair Curtis Sliwa as saying: “It was clear to us that Rob Astorino had veered away from the concept of the Reform Party while Latimer seemed to be more in league [with] what we stood for”. No mention as to whether the 13 members of the state Reform Party’s executive committee, who unanimously voted to endorse Latimer, had considered any other candidates for Westchester county executive, as for instance, county Legislator Jenkins – or the “process”, if any, that preceded the vote. Were candidates required to complete questionnaires? Were they interviewed? Was there any outreach to Westchester County’s 35 Reform Party members? You then **uncritically** quote Senator Latimer as saying that he is looking “to restore civic engagement and transparency” in Westchester. No mention of his senate record, in Albany, on

“civic engagement and transparency”, though you do report that a spokesman for Astorino stated that he would be running on his record as county executive.

It is essential that you follow up with an investigative story – especially in light of your subtitle accusation of Astorino “seek[ing] to steal the line back” – which your article particularizes as follows:

“Astorino will try to take the line back in a Sept. 12 primary. Latimer will appear on the ballot, but Astorino’s name will have to be written in.

There are only 35 registered Reform members in the entire county, according to most recent Board of Elections active voter logs.

There is still time for voters not registered to a party to become Reform members, though.”

What is the source for your inference that Astorino will flood the Reform Party with new registrants who will write in his name? Is it Latimer’s written statement, from which you quote – or is his written statement merely his response:

“Latimer, a state senator from Rye, said in a statement he was looking ‘to restore civic engagement and transparency’ in Westchester.

‘These are values that Rob Astorino has taken for granted...,’ Latimer said. ‘No amount of political tricks o[r] party raiding attempts by Astorino will change this,

and that is why the Reform Party has turned its back on him.”

Surely, if Astorino is flooding the ranks of the Westchester Reform Party with new registrants to achieve a write-in victory on the Reform Party line, Latimer is doing likewise to secure his own write-in victory. And, how about Jenkins, from whom, apparently, you have gotten no comment. Would it be “theft” if he tried to get in on the action by recruiting new Reform Party members who will write in his name on its line? And why have you not mentioned Jenkins as having a stake in any primary other than the Democratic primary as a challenger to Latimer. Indeed, is nothing happening on the “write-in” front with respect to the Working Families, Independence, and Women’s Equality lines, which, as you report, Latimer has, in addition to the Reform Party line.

To assist in your investigative follow-up of the candidates and the parties – and germane to all the foregoing – [attached](#) is my [OPEN LETTER](#), as director of the Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA), [entitled “The NYS Reform Party of Curtis Sliwa MUST Rescind its Endorsement of, & Party Line to, Senator George Latimer for Westchester County Executive & the Other Parties Must Follow Suit – Unless they Deem Corruption in Office a Qualification”](#). It was sent yesterday, [by the below e-mail, to candidates Latimer, Astorino, and Jenkins – and all eight recognized political parties.](#)

In furtherance of our common goal of furnishing the electorate in Westchester county and throughout the state with the information essential to its casting intelligent votes in the September 12<sup>th</sup> primary and November 7<sup>th</sup> general elections, I am available to answer your questions and to be interviewed, directly, not through a spokesperson or by written statement.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director  
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)  
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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) [<mailto:elena@judgewatch.org>]

**Sent:** Thursday, August 10, 2017 12:27 PM

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Cc: 'pleber@workingfamilies.org' <[pleber@workingfamilies.org](mailto:pleber@workingfamilies.org)>; 'nywomensequalityparty@gmail.com' <[nywomensequalityparty@gmail.com](mailto:nywomensequalityparty@gmail.com)>; 'frankmackay@yahoo.com' <[frankmackay@yahoo.com](mailto:frankmackay@yahoo.com)>; 'tj.wcdems@gmail.com' <[tj.wcdems@gmail.com](mailto:tj.wcdems@gmail.com)>; 'chairman@westchestergop.com' <[chairman@westchestergop.com](mailto:chairman@westchestergop.com)>; 'ff607@optonline.net' <[ff607@optonline.net](mailto:ff607@optonline.net)>; 'chair2@gpny.org' <[chair2@gpny.org](mailto:chair2@gpny.org)>; 'sec@gpny.org' <[sec@gpny.org](mailto:sec@gpny.org)>; 'michaelvlawler@gmail.com' <[michaelvlawler@gmail.com](mailto:michaelvlawler@gmail.com)>; 'profmerrell@optonline.net' <[profmerrell@optonline.net](mailto:profmerrell@optonline.net)>; 'latimer@nysenate.gov' <[latimer@nysenate.gov](mailto:latimer@nysenate.gov)>; 'mallison@nysenate.gov' <[mallison@nysenate.gov](mailto:mallison@nysenate.gov)>; 'Peter Loughran' <[loughran@nysenate.gov](mailto:loughran@nysenate.gov)>; 'wmurphy@nysenate.gov' <[wmurphy@nysenate.gov](mailto:wmurphy@nysenate.gov)>; 'kenjenkins01@gmail.com' <[kenjenkins01@gmail.com](mailto:kenjenkins01@gmail.com)>; 'ce@westchestergov.com' <[ce@westchestergov.com](mailto:ce@westchestergov.com)>

**Subject: OPEN LETTER: The NYS Reform Part of Curtis Sliwa MUST Rescind its Endorsement of, & Party Line to, Senator Geo. Latimer for Westchester Co. Executive & the Other Parties Must Follow Suit -- Unless They Deem Corruption in Office a Qualification**

Attached is the Center for Judicial Accountability's OPEN LETTER of today's date entitled "**The NYS Reform Party of Curtis Sliwa MUST Rescind its Endorsement of, & Party Line to, Senator George Latimer for Westchester County Executive & the Other Parties Must Follow Suit – Unless they Deem Corruption in Office a Qualification**", herewith sent to ALL eight recognized political parties and to the three candidates seeking election/re-election to the office of Westchester County Executive: Messrs. Latimer, Astorino, and Jenkins.

The OPEN LETTER is already posted on CJA's website, [www.judgewatch.org](http://www.judgewatch.org), accessible via the prominent link "**OUTING CORRUPT & COLLUSIVE INCUMBENTS & Ending their Road to Re-Election & Higher Office in 2017, 2018, & Beyond – WITH EVIDENCE**". The direct link to the webpage for the letter, which also furnishes THE EVIDENCE on which it is based, is here: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/elections/ending-the-road-latimer.htm>.

I am available to answer questions, under oath, and to assist you to the max, toward what should be our common goal of open, honest, fiscally-responsible, responsive, and accountable government, such as we do NOT remotely have on the state level... You can change that!

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director  
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