

From: elena@judgewatch.org
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2026 9:17 AM
To: 'foil@nysenate.gov'; 'publicinfo@nyassembly.gov'

Subject: **FOIL/Records Request -- Timely promulgation of the "Budget Consideration Schedule" required by Joint Rule III, §1 of the Senate & Assembly Joint Permanent Rules**

**TO: Senate Records Access Officer/Secretary of the Senate Alejandra Paulino, Esq.
Acting Assembly Records Access Officer Amanda Contompasis**

On February 5th, I sent you the below FOIL/records request entitled "'Joint Budget Conference Committee' required by Joint Rule III, §2 of the Permanent Joint Rules of the Senate and Assembly" – to which you each responded, on February 12th ([here](#) & [here](#)), stating you had no responsive records.

On Friday, March 13th – seemingly late in the day – Assembly Speaker Heastie posted "[Legislature Announces General Conference Committee Appointments](#)", with a comparable "[Senate and Assembly Announce General Conference Committee Appointments](#)" also appearing on the Senate's website. **This was a month and a half beyond the 10 days mandated by Legislative Law 54-a and Joint Rule III, §2 for establishing a budget conference committee and subcommittees.**

Joint Rule III, §2 ends by stating that the General Conference Committee "shall file its written report in accord with the schedule established pursuant to section 1 of this rule". The "pursuant to [section 1 of this rule](#)" is entitled "Budget Consideration Schedule" and reads:

"In accordance with [section 54-a of the Legislative Law](#), **within ten days of the submission of the budget by the Governor pursuant to article VII of the Constitution**, the Temporary President of the Senate and the Speaker of the Assembly shall promulgate a schedule of dates for considering and acting upon such submission. Such schedule shall include the dates for those actions required to be taken by the legislature pursuant to [section 53 of the Legislative Law](#), dates for the convening of a joint budget conference committee or committees as provided herein, and a date by which such committee or committees shall issue a final report or reports." (bold added).

Pursuant to [Senate Rule XIV \["Freedom of Information"\]](#) and [Assembly Rules VIII \["Public Access to Records"\]](#), this is to request records reflecting compliance by Temporary Senate President Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Heastie with [Joint Rule III §1](#), **to wit**, their timely promulgation of the required "Budget Consideration Schedule", as I have found no such schedule posted on the Senate and Assembly websites.

Indeed, apart from the March 13th announcement of appointments and the initial meeting schedule of the General Conference Committee and its subcommittees, only one other budget schedule is posted on the Senate and Assembly websites, that of January 20th, entitled "Legislature Announces 2026 Joint Legislative Budget Hearing Schedule" ([here](#) & [here](#)), whose improper combining of the hearings required by [Legislative Law §53.2 for "heads of departments or divisions"](#) with those required by [Legislative Law §53.4 for the public](#) pursuant to [Legislative Law §32-A](#) I pointed out in my [written testimony for the February 11th budget hearing on "local government officials/general government"](#).

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director

Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

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From: elena@judgewatch.org <elena@judgewatch.org>

Sent: Thursday, February 5, 2026 9:08 AM

To: 'foil@nysenate.gov' <foil@nysenate.gov>; 'publicinfo@nyassembly.gov' <publicinfo@nyassembly.gov>

Subject: FOIL/records request: "Joint Budget Conference Committee" required by Joint Rule III, §2 of the Permanent Joint Rules of the Senate and Assembly

**TO: Senate Records Access Officer/Secretary of the Senate Alejandra Paulino, Esq.
Acting Assembly Records Access Officer Amanda Contompasis**

[Senate](#) and [Assembly](#) Permanent Joint Rule III, §2 entitled "Joint Budget Conference Committee" reads:

"In accordance with [section 54-a of the Legislative Law](#), within ten days of the submission of the budget by the Governor pursuant to article VII of the Constitution, the Temporary President of the Senate and the Speaker of the Assembly shall jointly establish a Joint Budget Conference Committee and, as they deem necessary, any number of subcommittees subordinate to such Joint Budget Conference Committee, to consider and reconcile such budget resolution or bills passed by, or as may be passed by, the Senate and Assembly. Such Joint Budget Conference Committee shall be constituted and conducted as prescribed in Joint Rule II and shall file its written report in accord with the schedule established pursuant to section 1 of this rule."

Governor Hochul submitted the budget on January 20, 2026 – making January 30, 2026 the date by which Temporary Senate President Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Heastie were required to "jointly establish a Joint Budget Conference Committee" and necessary subordinate subcommittees. Nevertheless, no announcement of same appears on the Senate and Assembly websites – nor other indicia of their establishment.

Pursuant to [Senate Rule XIV](#) ["Freedom of Information"] and [Assembly Rules VIII](#) ["Public Access to Records"], request is made for records of the establishment of the required Joint Budget Conference Committee for the FY2026-27 state budget, its membership, any subcommittees thereto, and their membership.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director

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