



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Klein Announces New Whistleblower Webpage to Expose Government Waste

JEFFREY D. KLEIN April 19, 2010

| ISSUE: **FINANCE, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, AGENCIES, LEGISLATURE, BUDGET**

NEW YORK, NY –State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) announced Monday that the Senate Task Force on Government Efficiency has launched a new webpage where New Yorkers can anonymously submit their ideas, suggestions and feedback on how the state can conserve resources in this tough fiscal time, as well as to report any suspected wasteful government spending or abuse of tax dollars.

<http://www.nysenate.gov/committee/task-force-government-efficiency>

As Chair of the Task Force, Senator Klein also sent a letter to Department of Correctional Services (DOCS) Commissioner Brian Fischer Monday seriously questioning the effectiveness and usefulness of DOCS Time & Attendance Audit Unit. Klein's letter follows a recent investigation by the offices of the New York State Comptroller and the NYS Inspector General, which brought to light massive travel and attendance fraud perpetrated by a DOCS

employee.

“Hard-working New Yorkers have sent their tax dollars to Albany, only to have them used to fatten someone else's pocket through falsified time sheets and expense claims. In these tough fiscal times, our state cannot and will not tolerate such abuse of government funds. This new website will provide an anonymous means for any New Yorker or state worker to immediately report potential abuse,” said State Senator Jeffrey D. Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester).

Last week, the Comptroller and Inspector General released a report detailing massive fraud perpetrated by a former director of the DOCS Food Production Center in Oneida County. This employee alone cost New York State taxpayers more than \$500,000, by filing fraudulent time sheets for seventeen years, and claiming reimbursements for travel expenses he did not incur.

“As we face tough budgetary choices once again this year, New York State must get smart about curbing spending wherever possible. By providing an outlet for public input, suggestions, and feedback, the Task Force on Government Efficiency is encouraging all New Yorkers to join our fight against wasteful uses of taxpayer dollars,” said State Senator Thomas P. Morahan (R-New City).

Last month, Klein probed Commissioner Fischer regarding excessive overtime pay, and property and administrative costs at DOCS, at a public hearing of the Task Force on Government Efficiency in Albany. The hearing was the second conducted by the Task Force since its inception earlier this year aimed at taking a closer look at state agency spending and investigating potential ways to save the state money.

Klein's office was the first to expose wasteful spending at the Department of Correctional Services in a report earlier this year in which more than \$15 million dollars was identified in potential wasteful government spending through overtime pay and administrative and housing costs. In FY 2008-2009, for example, DOCS spent \$87 million on overtime costs, 20% of overtime spent by the entire state.

Klein's report also found that by consolidating and streamlining administrative staff positions, duties and contracts, DOCS could cut administrative costs by 20% and potentially save the state up to \$10 million a year.

The Senate Task Force on Government Efficiency was created with the goal of uncovering inefficient government spending and developing productive solutions to put taxpayer dollars to better use. Chaired by State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Jeff Klein, the bipartisan Task Force was formally announced in March of 2010. It is comprised of Senators Darrel Aubertine, Brian X. Foley, Craig Johnson, Betty Little, George Maziarz, Tom Morahan, Jose Peralta, Diane Savino, Jose Serrano, Bill Stachowski, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and Dave Valesky.

