



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Stephen M. Saland

SENATOR SALAND CALLS FOR AN IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION - Hundreds of thousands of public dollars funneled to ACORN called into question

STEPHEN M. SALAND September 7, 2009

Senator Steve Saland (R, I, C – Poughkeepsie) called upon the offices of the State Attorney General and State Comptroller to investigate the hundreds of thousands of public dollars being funneled to ACORN through member items earmarked for the New York Agency for Community Affairs (NYACA).

Senator Saland was made aware of the ACORN member item connection through an article published September 3, 2009 in the *The City Hall News*. According to the news account, NYACA has transferred most of its money to ACORN which is heavily involved in political activity. It was disclosed that NYACA does not even have its own payroll, but rather serves as a “fiscal sponsor” to transfer most of its government contracts and grant money directly to ACORN.

“This jaw-dropping article once again illustrates the need for greater scrutiny in the distribution of member item funds,” said Senator Saland. “It is troubling that ACORN, an organization deeply entrenched in promoting political candidates, is receiving member items from the same politicians who benefit from ACORN’s campaign assistance.”

In his letter to the Attorney General and the State Comptroller, Senator Saland requests an immediate investigation to ensure that the member items are not being utilized to finance political activities, and are, in fact, being exclusively used for public purposes.

“To ignore the need for an investigation of these member items would be a gross injustice,” said Saland. “I am confident Attorney General Cuomo and Comptroller DiNapoli will do the right thing and demand a full accounting of public tax dollars being channeled to ACORN,” concluded Senator Saland.

September 4, 2009

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo

Attorney General

State Capitol

Albany, New York 12224

Hon. Thomas DiNapoli

State Comptroller

110 State Street, 15th Floor

Albany, New York 12236

Dear Attorney General Cuomo and Comptroller DiNapoli:

On September 3, 2009, the City Hall News reported that the New York Agency for Community Affairs (NYACA), which shares staff, board members and office space with ACORN, has received hundreds of thousands of dollars in member item funds.

According to the City Hall News account, NYACA has transferred most of the government money it has received through grants and contracts to ACORN. Further, Mariana Davenport, NYACA's Executive Director and ACORN employee admits she has no independent payroll and simply acts as a "fiscal sponsor" for taxpayer funding meant for ACORN initiatives.

As I am sure you would agree, given ACORN's well documented role in campaign-related work, the hundreds of thousands of dollars in member item money earmarked for NYACA should be closely scrutinized. I call upon both of your offices to conduct an immediate and thorough investigation to require a full accounting to ensure that taxpayer dollars are not

being utilized to finance political activities, and are, in fact, being exclusively used for public purposes.

Your prompt attention and consideration to this important issue is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Stephen M. Saland

Senator

<http://www.cityhallnews.com/news/132/ARTICLE/2116/2009-09-02.html>