

OPINION

LETTERS POLICY

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Corning Inc. clearly backing Boland

To the Editor:
 Oh, boy. What a Boland fest we have had recently. First there was the news that Corning Incorporated and one of its subsidiaries had donated more than is allowed to his campaign, followed by a sincere mea culpa and a slew of letters supporting him as the best, possibly, the only choice for Mayor.

Giving him the benefit of the doubt, I concede that accepting the money was a genuine mistake.

That said, if I, as an independent candidate, made a similar mistake, I would be thrown out on my ear.

But what really bothers me is that at least two people in the Corning empire authorized those payments. I find it really hard to believe that a corporation of the size and stature of Corning Incorporated is ignorant of the limits on contributions to local political campaigns.

The obvious conclusion is that the company really, really wants Boland to be the next mayor.

Why, I ask myself?

Elizabeth Whitehouse
 Independent candidate for mayor

Morrongiello has strong professional reputation

To the Editor:
 Dr. Michael Morrongiello is a candidate for the town council in the Town of Corning. I have known Dr. Morrongiello professionally for over twenty years. He has a sterling reputation among the legal community and is held in high regard by the courts. He has been expert witness and given professional opinions in highly complex cases. He is well prepared, articulate and quick on his feet. He cannot be intimidated and plays it straight. He favors nothing but the facts and the truth. He would make a hardworking and honest member and be a benefit to the Town of Corning on its town council.

Allan Charlap
 Elmira

Political norms?

To the Editor:
 One of the many

attacks on President Trump I find very interesting, he does not adhere to or abide by "Political Norms"! Question, what are those "Political Norms"? From my bleacher seats way out in center field, this is what I observe them to be.

"Political Norms" begin with extreme, wasteful spending, which then translates to extreme oppressive taxation. A political class behaving like royalty, using their position of representative of the people to line their own pockets! Diverting more money to government through incompetence and waste provides more for the politicians to skim.

Lying during campaigns to get elected which clearly carries over to their everyday service as a matter of habit seems a "Political Norm"! Deception, hiding from the people questionable activities of politicians!

"Verbal Rope-a-dope" talking in circles incessantly, saying nothing, till people's eyes glaze over and minds are numbed. Once seen as rhetoric above our intellect, we now know that used car salesman BS, their way to make them feel superior and profit.

There is the "Written Rope-a-Dope", manipulating laws and bills so dishonest politicians can interpret them any way they wish. Look at the recent revelations of Congress cultivating the "Opioid Epidemic" in America. The slimy, dirty and corrupt creatures stalking in the "Washington Swamp" is the "Political Norm"!

Mark Twain said, "It could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly native American criminal class except Congress."

These the "Political Norms", incompetence, waste, fraud and corruption, our politicians covet so dearly!

Gerald Furnkranz
 Millport

Weinstein took lead in candidates' forum

To the Editor:
 I have called Corning my home for almost three decades. We have raised our children here, have volunteered throughout the community and have enjoyed all Corning has to offer. However, like many other cities, Corning is

facing some pressing issues such as infrastructure and ever growing property taxes that need prompt attention. Interested in hearing what the current mayoral candidates solutions are on these issues, I attended this week's League of Women Voters Forum attended by the three candidates.

Nick Weinstein clearly stood above his two opponents. He brought attention to the major issues and offered a clear vision for Corning's future. I was impressed by his grasp of the facts, plain talk and in depth understanding of the problems facing the city. Most refreshing was his admission of not having all of the answers yet having the willingness to listen, ask the hard questions and find realistic solutions. It was a welcome change. He clearly demonstrated that if elected, he will be a strong, independent advocate for all Corning residents.

The world is changing so quickly and in ways none of us could have imagined. Having a fresh perspective and a new generation of leaders at City Hall will help us navigate those changes. Nick Weinstein embodies that change and would put Corning on firm footing for the future.

Jodi Kohli
 Corning

McAllister's experience makes him bench-ready

To the Editor:
 The voters of Steuben County have an opportunity to elect an outstanding individual, Patrick McAllister, as a Surrogate Court Judge. As an attorney for more than 35 years, Pat has extensive experience within the Surrogate Court system, sometimes in adversarial situations. He has extensive experience in all the areas in Surrogate Court, including estates, guardianships, adoptions, felony criminal matters and Family Court. In all of these areas of law, I have recognized, as many have, what an outstanding representative of our Surrogate Court Justice System Pat has been.

Pat has the demonstrated skills in the specific areas of law that come before the Surrogate Court Judge. He has the courage to do what

is right and the common sense to see the "big picture". Pat is well respected by the legal and local community as evidenced by the broad base of support he has received.

Please join me in electing Patrick McAllister to continue the honorable work of representing the residents of Steuben County. Please vote for Pat McAllister Nov. 7.

Rich Negri
 Corning Mayor

McAllister right choice for judge

To the Editor:
 With Surrogate Court Judge Marianne Furfure retiring at the end of the year, local attorneys have spent a lot of post-transactional time discussing the race. I am writing to support Pat McAllister for Surrogate Court Judge, not only because he is the only remaining candidate running for the position, but because Pat is the right choice for Surrogate Court Judge.

Pat has spent time with me in many different settings. He has worked alongside me in court; he has worked alongside me in the County Legislature; he has sat beside me in church; and he has dined at my table along with friends and family. During all those times, I have witnessed a man who cares about people; who has listened well; and who made well-reasoned decisions based upon the facts and circumstances at hand. I believe based on these professional and personal experiences that he will also serve well as the Surrogate.

Of course, there is more to Pat than my personal experiences. Pat has also handled many Surrogate Court proceedings and Criminal Court cases. In Surrogate Court, he has (among other things) guided executors and administrators through the complexities of the probate process and served in guardianship proceedings, including as a Court Evaluator. His history as an Assigned Counsel in criminal cases and family court cases also gives him valuable experience that will help him make good decisions as a Judge.

A Surrogate Court Judgeship is a very important position in our County. For decades Steuben County has been blessed with quality

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COMMENTARY | STATE SEN. TOM O'MARA, R-BIG FLATS

Public transit systems are lifelines

The future of rural, upstate New York public transportation has reached the desk of Governor Andrew Cuomo.

As this column is being written, the governor is about to make a critical decision on legislation I sponsored in 2017, which received nearly unanimous legislative approval, to establish an "Upstate Transit Funding Board" within the state the Department of Transportation (DOT). The governor vetoed similar legislation year. Many transportation advocates have joined me in urging the governor to reverse that decision this year. Whatever the governor decides, this issue must be addressed.

The specific concern – one I've sought to address since 2013 – poses a crisis for the future of rural, upstate public transportation. New York State's comprehensive Medicaid redesign strategy since 2013 has included a shift in the administration of "Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation," or NEMT, from localities to the state. Viewed as a cost-cutting move by state officials, many local transportation leaders have raised concerns about the plan – especially the impact the state takeover is having on rural communities and populations including the disabled, the elderly, and the rural workforce.

The state Department of Health (DOH) has been transitioning the management of transportation systems from locally based administration to a state-level system operated out of Albany.

However, local officials, mobility managers, transportation providers, and community organizations from impacted upstate regions say that the new, one-size-fits-all approach, which might be workable in suburban and urban areas downstate, has not proven cost-effective or efficient in their rural communities.

That represents the crux of the challenge. Many forums and meetings I have held over the past few years have reaffirmed this reality: the transition is not working. We have discussed the shortcomings of the new system, including the elimination of existing transportation routes, the future of locally based cost-efficiency initiatives,

and the overall disruption of services.

A number of local systems are at risk (and in Tioga County, for example, already eliminated) by Albany's attempt at a blanket, statewide approach to their management and operation. Stated another way: think of this transportation network as a wheel and Albany bureaucrats are taking spokes out of the wheel.


The changes have lacked common sense and cost too much. Local officials from numerous counties, including all of the counties I represent as part of the 58th Senate District (Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, Tompkins and Yates counties), have highlighted the flaws. We've been constantly working to bring more widespread attention to the changes underway, fully assess the consequences, and do what we can to ensure that the impact on rural residents receives a full and a fair hearing.

The legislation I sponsor stresses that fares alone are not sufficient to cover the costs of providing public transit services and the systems must rely on annual state funding. Consequently, the creation of an Upstate Transit Funding Board would ensure that discussions remain ongoing to continually identify sustainable funding options to provide for growth and stability in public transportation operating assistance, as well as create additional opportunities for supporting mobility options for upstate New York residents.

I believe we make a strong case. This action would ensure the long-term operation and viability of public transportation systems throughout the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, and across Upstate New York.

For thousands upon thousands of upstate residents, these systems provide indispensable links to their jobs, medical appointments, schools, shopping destinations, and other needs.

Public transit systems also stand as cornerstones of regional transportation networks vital to economic development, job growth, anti-poverty and housing initiatives, energy and environmental conservation.



— STAFF BOX —


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