

CENTER *for* JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY, INC.

Post Office Box 8101
White Plains, New York 10602

Tel: 914-421-1200

E-Mail: mail@judgewatch.org
Website: www.judgewatch.org

BY E-MAIL

January 23, 2017

TO: New York State Assembly
Robin Marilla, Records Access Officer

FROM: Elena Ruth Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)

RE: FOIL/RECORDS REQUESTS

- (1) Assembly Rule IV, §2(a) --“weekly time and day scheduled” for the meetings of each of the Assembly standing committees;
- (2) The MISSING 38th Assembly standing committee: referred-to in the Legislature’s proposed budget, but not among the 37 enumerated by Assembly Rule, IV, §1(a) or listed on the Assembly website

Following up our phone conversation earlier this afternoon, it appears that the Assembly’s website is in violation of Assembly Rule IV, §2 entitled “Meetings of standing committees”. Its paragraph a, also entitled “Meetings of standing committees”, begins as follows:

“Standing committees shall hold meetings at a regular weekly time and day as scheduled by the committee chairperson in consultation with the committee coordinators, as designated by the Speaker, and such set time shall be posted on the Assembly committee board and Assembly Internet site. ...”

As discussed, I could not find on the Assembly’s website any posting of the “set time” that has been fixed for the meetings of the 37 standing committees enumerated by Assembly Rule IV, §1(a) and listed on the Assembly’s website – and you were unable to show me where it might be.

Therefore, pursuant to Assembly Rule VIII (“Public Access to Information”), please furnish me with records showing:

- (1) that each of the Assembly’s standing committees, by its chairperson, has –“in consultation with the committee coordinators, as designated by the Speaker” – fixed a “regular weekly time and day” for its meetings; and

(2) the name(s) of the “committee coordinators, as designated by the Speaker”.

Please note that I am especially interested in the following Assembly standing committees – and records as to the “regular weekly time and day” for their meetings:

- (1) Committee on Governmental Operations;
- (2) Committee on Oversight, Analysis, and Investigation;
- (3) Ethics and Guidance;
- (4) Judiciary;
- (5) Codes;
- (6) Local Governments;
- (7) Ways and Means.

Also, as discussed, the only meeting agendas for the Assembly’s standing committees posted on the Assembly website – pursuant to Assembly Rule IV, §2(b) – are for the Assembly’s current week. There is no archive of committee meeting agenda from previous weeks. These disappear from the Assembly website – and are not accessible from it – once the current week is past. Presumably this is to conceal the infrequency with which so many Assembly standing committees actually meet – which is certainly NOT “weekly”, as Assembly Rule IV, §2(a) misleadingly implies.

Finally, inasmuch as page 2 of the Legislature’s uncertified proposed budget for fiscal year 2017-2018 describes the Assembly as “conducting its legislative business through the operation of 38 standing committees” – and there are only 37 standing committees enumerated by Assembly Rule IV, §1 and listed on the Assembly’s website – please furnish records as to the identity and operations of the additional Assembly standing committee purported by the Legislature’s proposed budget.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elong RTZ" followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Enclosures: pertinent pages from Assembly Rule IV, Assembly website, & Legislative budget

RULE IV COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees.

a. The standing committees shall be as follows:

Name of Committee	Number of Members
Aging	30
Agriculture	23
Alcoholism and Drug Abuse	14
Banks	31
Children and Families	17
Cities	16
Codes	22
Consumer Affairs and Protection	16
Corporations, Authorities and Commissions	26
Correction	13
Economic Development, Job Creation, Commerce and Industry	26
Education	31
Election Law	16
Energy	17
Environmental Conservation	30
Ethics and Guidance	8
Governmental Employees	14
Governmental Operations	14
Health	26
Higher Education	26
Housing	28
Insurance	25
Judiciary	21
Labor	29
Libraries and Education Technology	9
Local Governments	20
Mental Health	13
Oversight, Analysis and Investigation	7
Racing and Wagering	11
Real Property Taxation	10
Rules	31
Small Business	17
Social Services	18
Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development	21
Transportation	26
Veterans' Affairs	19
Ways and Means	35

b. The number of majority members of each standing committee shall be in the same ratio as the majority members of the House are to the entire membership of the House, with all fractional members being credited to the majority; provided, however that there shall be at least one minority member on each standing committee; and further provided that the Standing Committee on Ethics and Guidance shall consist of an equal number of majority and minority members. A member who in any calendar year has three or more unexcused absences, as determined by the chairperson or ranking minority member, as appropriate, from any regularly scheduled meeting of a standing committee at which bills are scheduled to be considered shall be removed from one or more of the standing committees to which he or she is assigned. The standing committee shall notify the member upon each unexcused absence and shall notify the Committee on Committees upon the second and any subsequent unexcused absences. The Committee on Committees shall notify the member of any resulting reduction in his or her committee assignments.


[Watch Live](#)
[Translate this page](#)

Committees, Commissions and Task Forces

[Assembly Home](#)

Standing Committees

[Assembly Members](#)

- [Aging - News Members](#)
- [Agriculture - News Members](#)
- [Alcoholism and Drug Abuse - News Members](#)
- [Banks - News Members](#)
- [Children and Families - News Members](#)
- [Cities - News Members](#)
- [Codes - News Members](#)
- [Consumer Affairs and Protection - News Members](#)
- [Corporations, Authorities and Commissions - News Members](#)
- [Correction - News Members](#)
- [Economic Development, Job Creation, Commerce and Industry - News Members](#)
- [Education - News Members](#)
- [Election Law - News Members](#)
- [Energy - News Members](#)
- [Environmental Conservation - News Members](#)
- [Ethics and Guidance - News Members](#)
- [Governmental Employees - News Members](#)
- [Governmental Operations - News Members](#)
- [Health - News Members](#)
- [Higher Education - News Members](#)
- [Housing - News Members](#)
- [Insurance - News Members](#)
- [Judiciary - News Members](#)
- [Labor - News Members](#)
- [Libraries and Education Technology - News Members](#)
- [Local Governments - News Members](#)
- [Mental Health - News Members](#)
- [Oversight, Analysis and Investigation - News Members](#)
- [Racing and Wagering - News Members](#)
- [Real Property Taxation - News Members](#)
- [Rules - News Members](#)
- [Small Business - News Members](#)
- [Social Services - News Members](#)
- [Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development - News Members](#)
- [Transportation - News Members](#)
- [Veterans' Affairs - News Members](#)
- [Ways and Means - News Members](#)

[Bill Search & Legislative Information](#)
[Standing Committee Public Hearing Calendar](#)
[Live Coverage of Legislative Proceedings](#)
[Speaker Press Releases](#)
[Legislative Reports](#)
[Committees Commissions & Task Forces](#)
[Rules of the Assembly](#)
[Task Force on Reapportionment Website](#)
[Minority Communications](#)
[Internship Program](#)
[Assembly Career Opportunities](#)
[About the Assembly and Capitol](#)
[Kids' Page](#)
[Grants Action News](#)
[Request Info](#)
[Directions and Maps](#)

Subcommittees

- [Agricultural Production & Technology - Members](#)
- [Agriculture Economic Development and Farmland Protection - Members](#)
- [Autism Retention - News Members](#)
- [Banking in Underserved Communities - News Members](#)
- [Catastrophic Natural Disasters - News Members](#)
- [Child Product Safety - News Members](#)
- [Community Integration - News Members](#)
- [Consumer Fraud Protection - News Members](#)
- [Criminal Procedure - Members](#)
- [Diversity in Law - News Members](#)
- [Effective Treatment - Members](#)
- [Election Day Operations and Voter Disenfranchisement - News Members](#)
- [Emerging Workforce - News Members](#)
- [Export Trade - Members](#)
- [Foster Care - News Members](#)
- [Infrastructure - News Members](#)
- [Insurer Investments and Market Practices in Underserved Areas - News Members](#)
- [Intergenerational Care - Members](#)
- [Intergovernmental Consumer Affairs - Members](#)
- [Micro Business - Members](#)
- [Mitchell-Lama - News Members](#)
- [Museums & Cultural Institutions - Members](#)
- [Outreach and Oversight of Senior Citizen Programs - News](#)
- [Oversight of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises \(MWBEs\) - News Members](#)
- [Oversight of the Department of Environmental Conservation - News Members](#)
- [Regional Tourism Development - Members](#)
- [Regulated Mortgage Lenders - News Members](#)
- [Renewable Energy - News Members](#)
- [Retention of Homeownership and Stabilization of Affordable Housing - News Members](#)
- [Students with Special Needs - News Members](#)

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

The Lieutenant Governor serves as the Senate's President and has a casting vote. The Lieutenant Governor's salary of \$151,500 and also a portion of the operations of the Lieutenant Governor's Office appear within the Legislative Budget.

Budget Highlights – Lieutenant Governor

The recommended appropriation of \$282,874 for FY 2017-18 for the Lieutenant Governor represents an increase of 3% or \$8,239 from the amount appropriated for FY 2016-17.

SENATE

The Senate is composed of 63 Members elected for two-year terms from districts around the state. Each Senator represents approximately 308,000 constituents. The Senate conducts its legislative business through the operation of 34 Standing Committees.

The Senate elects from among its Members for a two-year term a Temporary President and Majority Leader who directs and guides the business of the Senate, appoints Members to Senate Standing Committees, and appoints the Senate's staff. The Temporary President and Majority Leader serves as the presiding officer in the absence of the Lieutenant Governor or may delegate this duty to another Member. Each Conference of the Senate chooses a Leader from among its membership.

Budget Highlights - Senate

The recommended appropriation for the Senate of \$94,660,764 for FY 2017-18 represents an increase of 3% or \$2,757,110 from the amount appropriated in FY 2016-17. This modest appropriation increase is the first time in nine years that the Senate has increased its' budget. Since January of 2011 the Senate has achieved cost savings by reducing staff levels by over 300 employees, consolidated certain administrative functions and departments, restricted staff travel and created other operational efficiencies. Furthermore, the increased costs associated with the creation of a 63rd Senatorial Seat in 2013 have been absorbed within existing appropriation authority the last four years. After nine years of either zero or reduced growth in the Senate's appropriation, this increase is necessary to support the operations of the Senate. Even with the recommended increase for FY 2017-18, the Senate appropriation will be less than the \$95,520,921 that was appropriated back in FY 2008-09.

ASSEMBLY

The Assembly is composed of 150 members, from districts around the state, who are elected for two-year terms. Each Member of the Assembly represents approximately 129,000 constituents. The Assembly conducts its legislative business through the operation of 38 standing committees. ✓

The Assembly members elect a Speaker who directs and guides the business of the Assembly, and appoints members to Assembly Standing Committees and Assembly leadership positions. The Speaker serves as the presiding officer of the Assembly. The minority party of the Assembly chooses a Minority Leader from their membership.