

From: Phil Zisman <phil.zisman@theyonkersledger.com>
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2026 10:01 AM
To: elena@judgewatch.org
Cc: Ruth Walter

Subject: **Re: Your yesterday's column "New York State's Budget is Late..." -- April 14, 2026 grand jury/public corruption complaint vs Stewart-Cousins, Pretlow, & Westchester's other state legislators, filed with Westchester D.A. Cacace**

Hello Elena,
Thanks. for your comment.

If you read my very short article, you'll note that I was not critiquing the State budget process. I am covering the Yonkers budget, which obviously is dependent. in a large part, on State aid.

I do find your comment a bit intemperate. Fraud? That seems to be an overstatement. I note that there is no injunction against the Legislature forbidding continuing resolutions, and a core element of fraud is deception, which doesn't appear to apply.

Best,
Phil Zisman

On Sun, Apr 26, 2026 at 2:01 PM <elena@judgewatch.org> wrote:

TO: [Phil Zisman/Yonkers Ledger Political and Government Reporter & Feature Writer](#)

It appears from your yesterday's column "[New York State's Budget is Late. Where Does that Leave Yonkers?](#)" that you are unaware that the state budget is "OFF THE CONSTITUTIONAL RAILS" and that New York has a rolling budget, with each appropriation bill, excepting for the legislature and judiciary, becoming "law immediately" upon the Senate and Assembly reconciling their separate strike-outs and reductions in those bills ([Article VII, Section 4](#)), and that the inclusion of non-revenue policy in the budget, by so-called "Article VII bills", is the product of fraud and is unconstitutional.

For more than a dozen years, this has been the subject of testimony, complaints, and lawsuits by the [Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. \(CJA\)](#), a non-partisan, non-profit citizens' organization, based in White Plains, of which I am director and co-founder. Above-attached, pertaining to the FY2026-27 state budget, is CJA's April 14th grand jury/public corruption complaint to New York's 62 D.A.s., including Westchester D.A. Cacace, from whom prosecution is sought against Westchester's state legislators – most importantly, Temporary Senate President Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Ways and Means Committee Chair Gary Pretlow.

A week ago, I forwarded the complaint to [The Journal News](#) by the below April 19th e-mail, to which there has been no response – and I am cc'ing it on this e-mail, as a reminder.

I am available to answer questions and to assist you, to the max. Call me, *no matter how early or late*, as TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE, both with respect to the state budget and this year's elections.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
www.judgewatch.org
914-421-1200
elena@judgewatch.org

From: elena@judgewatch.org <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2026 1:53 PM
To: 'cyale@lohud.com' <cyale@lohud.com>; 'drobinson@lohud.com' <drobinson@lohud.com>; 'Mrichter@gannett.com' <Mrichter@gannett.com>; 'cmckenna@gannett.com' <cmckenna@gannett.com>; 'ebarnes@gannett.com' <ebarnes@gannett.com>; 'ebarnes@usatodayco.com' <ebarnes@usatodayco.com>
Cc: 'hfalkey@localiq.com' <hfalkey@localiq.com>; 'mkilian@gannett.com' <mkilian@gannett.com>; 'staddeo@gannett.com' <staddeo@gannett.com>; 'snorris@gannett.com' <snorris@gannett.com>; 'william.ramseyiii@gannett.com' <william.ramseyiii@gannett.com>

Subject: Grand Jury/Public Corruption Complaint pertaining to the FY2026-27 State Budget vs NYS' Highest Public Officers, filed with NYS' 62 D.A.s, including Westchester D.A. Cacace

TO: [Gannett – Lohud/Journal News](#)
[Executive Editor Carrie Yale](#)
[New York State Team Editor David Robinson](#)
[Local News & Opinion Manager Matt Richter](#)
[Government/Politics Reporter Chris McKenna](#)
[New York State Team Statehouse Reporter Emily Barnes](#)

I have received no responses from you to my [March 13th e-mail](#) entitled "TIME-SENSITIVE: The Corruption of the Legislative Budget & State Budget by Senator Stewart-Cousins & Westchester's Other State Legislators -- & the 2026 Elections", including [Statehouse Reporter Emily Barnes](#), who, as I subsequently discovered from the "[exportable list](#)" on the [Legislative Correspondents Association's new website](#), is an LCA member for the "USA Today Network".

As an LCA member, with a listed e-mail address of ebarnes@usatodayco.com, I sent Ms. Barnes two further e-mails. The first, an [April 7th e-mail](#) entitled "ALL ten of the FY2026-27 budget bills are rife with unconstitutionality, fraud, & larceny – the EVIDENCE of which upends NYS' 2026 electoral races", contained a paragraph reading:

"If it is not your intention to report on this EVIDENCE – and to get answers from the public officers responsible, starting with Temporary Senate President Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Heastie, Senate Finance Committee Chair Krueger, Assembly Ways

and Means Committee Chair Pretlow, and, of course, Governor Hochul, each running for re-election, please forward this e-mail to your editors and highest managerial levels and counsel, so that they can be held accountable, with you, for your knowingly false, corruption-abetting, election-rigging journalism, having NO First Amendment protection.”

Did Ms. Barnes share this April 7th e-mail with you? How about my below April 14th e-mail, with the above-attached NOTICE & grand jury/public corruption complaint to NYS’ 62 D.A.s, including Westchester County D.A. Cacace, containing a comparable paragraph to LCA reporters:

“If it is your intention to continue to conceal and affirmatively misrepresent the situation by your journalism, please, as previously requested, immediately forward this e-mail to the highest editors and managerial levels of your respective publications, including counsel, so that there is no question of their knowledge of, and liability for, your corruption-abetting, election-rigging, journalistic fraud, having no First Amendment protection.”

And did Ms. Barnes share these e-mails with other USA Today editors and management, such as listed on the [staff directory of the Democrat & Chronicle](#), which is where she is listed. Among these, Publisher Heather Falkey, Executive Editor Michael Kilian, Deputy New York State Editor Sarah Taddeo, News Director Scott Norris, and Enterprise Editor William Ramsey, all herein cc’d. Did they approve Ms. Barnes’ corruption-concealing, cover-up journalism about the FY2026-27 state budget, directly impacting this year’s electoral races?

So that I may be guided accordingly, please confirm that the Journal News will be reporting on the EVIDENCE I have furnished of the corruption and larceny of the FY2026-27 state budget and the collusion therein of Westchester’s state legislators, first and foremost, Temporary Senate President Stewart Cousins and Assembly Ways and Means Committee Chair Pretlow, and, if not, the reason – and that this has been communicated to, and endorsed by, USA Today’s highest management, editors, and counsel, whose names and e-mail addresses I request.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc.

www.judgewatch.org

914-421-1200

cell: 646-220-7987

elena@judgewatch.org

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

Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2026 1:24 PM

To: 'gwen@adirondackexplorer.org' <gwen@adirondackexplorer.org>; 'B Lyons@TimesUnion.com' <B Lyons@TimesUnion.com>; 'Dan.Clark@timesunion.com' <Dan.Clark@timesunion.com>; 'Ezra.Bitterman@TimesUnion.com' <Ezra.Bitterman@TimesUnion.com>;

alexander.macdougall@timesunion.com <alexander.macdougall@timesunion.com>;
Grace.Jiang@timesunion.com <Grace.Jiang@timesunion.com>; timothy.fanning@timesunion.com
 <timothy.fanning@timesunion.com>; mhill@ap.org <mhill@ap.org>; aizaguirre@ap.org
 <aizaguirre@ap.org>; rjustin@bloombergindustry.com <rjustin@bloombergindustry.com>;
rgavin@buffnews.com <rgavin@buffnews.com>; rlewis@cityandstateny.com
 <rlewis@cityandstateny.com>; klisa@cityandstateny.com <klisa@cityandstateny.com>;
cj.hughes@crainsnewyork.com <cj.hughes@crainsnewyork.com>; agault@wdt.net
 <agault@wdt.net>; Keshia.clukey@newsday.com <Keshia.clukey@newsday.com>;
yancey.roy@newsday.com <yancey.roy@newsday.com>; stephen.hughes@newsday.com
 <stephen.hughes@newsday.com>; akash@nysfocus.com <akash@nysfocus.com>;
cbragg@nysfocus.com <cbragg@nysfocus.com>; chris@nysfocus.com <chris@nysfocus.com>;
colin@nysfocus.com <colin@nysfocus.com>; isabelle@nysfocus.com <isabelle@nysfocus.com>;
jenny@nysfocus.com <jenny@nysfocus.com>; melissa@nysfocus.com <melissa@nysfocus.com>;
sam@nysfocus.com <sam@nysfocus.com>; nick@nysfocus.com <nick@nysfocus.com>;
blee@alm.com <blee@alm.com>; vgolden@nypost.com <vgolden@nypost.com>;
ben.oreskes@nytimes.com <ben.oreskes@nytimes.com>; grace.ashford@nytimes.com
 <grace.ashford@nytimes.com>; jay.root@nytimes.com <jay.root@nytimes.com>;
bernadette.hogan@charter.com <bernadette.hogan@charter.com>; JSheridan@news10.com
 <JSheridan@news10.com>; jbeeferman@politico.com <jbeeferman@politico.com>;
billmahoney@politico.com <billmahoney@politico.com>; kcordero@politico.com
 <kcordero@politico.com>; mfrench@politico.com <mfrench@politico.com>; nreisman@politico.com
 <nreisman@politico.com>; lynn.halliburton@statewatch.com <lynn.halliburton@statewatch.com>;
kevin@statewatch.com <kevin@statewatch.com>; shaneking@statewatch.com
 <shaneking@statewatch.com>; matthew.mirro@statewatch.com
 <matthew.mirro@statewatch.com>; austin@streetsblog.org <austin@streetsblog.org>;
susan.arbetter@charter.com <susan.arbetter@charter.com>; jack.arpey@charter.com
 <jack.arpey@charter.com>; Maryfrancis.Stoute@charter.com <Maryfrancis.Stoute@charter.com>;
timothy.p.williams@charter.com <timothy.p.williams@charter.com>; aoife.forbes@wcny.org
 <aoife.forbes@wcny.org>; David.lombardo@wcny.org <David.lombardo@wcny.org>;
SDestra@wmht.org <SDestra@wmht.org>; EKline@wmht.org <EKline@wmht.org>;
kkozak@wmht.org <kkozak@wmht.org>; jcampbell@wnyc.org <jcampbell@wnyc.org>;
jvielkind@nypublicradio.org <jvielkind@nypublicradio.org>; sking@wxxi.org <sking@wxxi.org>;
johnsond4@newpaltz.edu <johnsond4@newpaltz.edu>; jsartor-francis@news10.com <jsartor-francis@news10.com>;
nicole.neuman@charter.com <nicole.neuman@charter.com>;
ebarnes@usatodayco.com <ebarnes@usatodayco.com>; bianca@nysfocus.com
 <bianca@nysfocus.com>; Kyle Hughes' <khughes@nysnys.com>; bphillip@nysenate.gov
 <bphillip@nysenate.gov>; esther.sun@hearst.com <esther.sun@hearst.com>

Subject: Grand Jury/Public Corruption Complaint Pertaining to the FY2026-27 State Budget vs NYS' Highest Public Officers, Filed with NYS' 62 D.A.s, DAASNY -- & NYS Commission on Prosecutorial Conduct

TO: [Legislative Correspondents Association Roster](#) & [here](#)

Following up my [January 29th e-mail](#), [March 13th e-mail](#), and [April 7th e-mail](#) to you pertaining to the FY2026-27 state budget and this year's electoral races, which you have ignored, *in toto*, in reporting on the state budget as if there is nothing unconstitutional, unlawful, fraudulent, and larcenous about it, and in reporting on the races for governor, attorney general, comptroller, and state legislative seats, as if the

incumbents running for re-election can be re-elected, when the evidence furnished you establishes, open-and-shut, that all incumbents must be indicted for corruption pertaining to the budget – and will be convicted – below, with the above-attached, is my today's e-mail to New York's 62 district attorneys and their institutional entity, the District Attorneys Association of the State of New York, to which the New York State Commission on Prosecutorial Conduct is cc'd.

If it is your intention to continue to conceal and affirmatively misrepresent the situation by your journalism, please, as previously requested, immediately forward this e-mail to the highest editors and managerial levels of your respective publications, including counsel, so that there is no question of their knowledge of, and liability for, your corruption-abetting, election-rigging, journalistic fraud, having no First Amendment protection.

I am available to answer questions. Don't you have any?

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
www.judgewatch.org
914-421-1200
elena@judgewatch.org

From: elena@judgewatch.org <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2026 9:23 AM
To: 'president@daasny.org' <president@daasny.org>; 'mdonnelly@renesco.com' <mdonnelly@renesco.com>; 'morgan.bitton@daasny.org' <morgan.bitton@daasny.org>; 'lee.kindlon@albanycountyny.gov' <lee.kindlon@albanycountyny.gov>; 'peter.degnan@alleganyco.com' <peter.degnan@alleganyco.com>; 'clarkda@bronxda.nyc.gov' <clarkda@bronxda.nyc.gov>; 'paul.battisti@broomecountyny.gov' <paul.battisti@broomecountyny.gov>; 'aesmith@cattco.org' <aesmith@cattco.org>; 'bantonacci@cayugacounty.us' <bantonacci@cayugacounty.us>; 'schmidtj@chqgov.gov' <schmidtj@chqgov.gov>; 'wwetmore@chemungcountyny.gov' <wwetmore@chemungcountyny.gov>; 'mferraraese@co.chenango.ny.us' <mferraraese@co.chenango.ny.us>; 'andrew.wylie@clintoncountygov.com' <andrew.wylie@clintoncountygov.com>; 'districtattorney@columbiacountyny.gov' <districtattorney@columbiacountyny.gov>; 'pperfetti@cortland-co.org' <pperfetti@cortland-co.org>; 'shawn.smith@co.delaware.ny.us' <shawn.smith@co.delaware.ny.us>; 'aparisi@dutchessny.gov' <aparisi@dutchessny.gov>; 'Michael.Keane@erie.gov' <Michael.Keane@erie.gov>; 'michael.langey@essexcountyny.gov' <michael.langey@essexcountyny.gov>; 'elizabeth.crawford@franklincountyny.gov' <elizabeth.crawford@franklincountyny.gov>; 'mpoulin@fultoncountyny.gov' <mpoulin@fultoncountyny.gov>; 'kevin.finnell@co.geneseeny.gov' <kevin.finnell@co.geneseeny.gov>; 'jstanzione@discovergreene.com' <jstanzione@discovergreene.com>; 'mpurdue@hamiltoncountyny.gov' <mpurdue@hamiltoncountyny.gov>; 'jcarpenter@herkimercounty.org' <jcarpenter@herkimercounty.org>; 'kristynam@co.jefferson.ny.us' <kristynam@co.jefferson.ny.us>; 'gonzalee@brooklynda.org' <gonzalee@brooklynda.org>;

'jefftompkins@lewiscounty.ny.gov' <jefftompkins@lewiscounty.ny.gov>;
'ashleywilliams@co.livingston.ny.us' <ashleywilliams@co.livingston.ny.us>;
'william.gabor@madisoncounty.ny.gov' <william.gabor@madisoncounty.ny.gov>;
'bgreen@monroecounty.gov' <bgreen@monroecounty.gov>; 'cpearson@da.montgomery.ny.us'
<cpearson@da.montgomery.ny.us>; 'Anne.donnely@nassauda.org' <Anne.donnely@nassauda.org>;
'bragga@dany.nyc.gov' <bragga@dany.nyc.gov>; 'brian.seaman@niagaracounty.com'
<brian.seaman@niagaracounty.com>; 'tcarville@ocgov.net' <tcarville@ocgov.net>;
'williamfitzpatrick@ongov.net' <williamfitzpatrick@ongov.net>;
'jason.macbride@ontariocountyny.gov' <jason.macbride@ontariocountyny.gov>;
'dhoovler@orangecountygov.com' <dhoovler@orangecountygov.com>;
'susan.howard@orleanscountyny.gov' <susan.howard@orleanscountyny.gov>;
'anthony.dimartino@oswegocounty.gov' <anthony.dimartino@oswegocounty.gov>;
'didonnac@otsegocounty.com' <didonnac@otsegocounty.com>; 'Robert.Tendy@putnamcountyny.gov'
<Robert.Tendy@putnamcountyny.gov>; 'katz@queensda.org' <katz@queensda.org>;
'mcmahonda@rcda.nyc.gov' <mcmahonda@rcda.nyc.gov>; 'WalshT@rocklandda.org'
<WalshT@rocklandda.org>; 'gpasqua@stlawco.org' <gpasqua@stlawco.org>;
'beby@saratogacountyny.gov' <beby@saratogacountyny.gov>;
'robert.carney@schenectadycounty.com' <robert.carney@schenectadycounty.com>;
'luhr.christopher@schohariecounty-ny.gov' <luhr.christopher@schohariecounty-ny.gov>;
'jhourihan@schuylercountyny.gov' <jhourihan@schuylercountyny.gov>; 'jinabinger@co.seneca.ny.us'
<jinabinger@co.seneca.ny.us>; 'Bbaker@steubencountyNY.gov' <Bbaker@steubencountyNY.gov>;
'brian.conaty@co.sullivan.ny.us' <brian.conaty@co.sullivan.ny.us>; 'martink@tiogacountyny.gov'
<martink@tiogacountyny.gov>; 'MVH@tompkins-co.org' <MVH@tompkins-co.org>;
'enne@co.ulster.ny.us' <enne@co.ulster.ny.us>; 'carusonej@warrencountyny.gov'
<carusonej@warrencountyny.gov>; 'tjordan@washingtoncountyny.gov'
<tjordan@washingtoncountyny.gov>; 'ccallanan@co.wayne.ny.us' <ccallanan@co.wayne.ny.us>;
'scacace@westchesterda.net' <scacace@westchesterda.net>; 'vhemming@wyomingco.net'
<vhemming@wyomingco.net>; 'tcasella@yatescounty.org' <tcasella@yatescounty.org>;
'julaine.gelderman@suffolkcountyny.com' <julaine.gelderman@suffolkcountyny.com>;
'morgan.bitton@daasny.org' <morgan.bitton@daasny.org>
Cc: 'dalonso@vedder.com' <dalonso@vedder.com>; 'mgb@mayobartlett.com'
<mgb@mayobartlett.com>; 'chantelle@grandsolutions.com' <chantelle@grandsolutions.com>;
'marne lenox@fd.org' <marne lenox@fd.org>; 'amarion@abramslaw.com'
<amarion@abramslaw.com>; 'tjf@foleygriffin.com' <tjf@foleygriffin.com>;
'Michael.Simons@cpc.ny.gov' <Michael.Simons@cpc.ny.gov>; 'Susan.Friedman@cpc.ny.gov'
<Susan.Friedman@cpc.ny.gov>; 'info@cpc.ny.gov' <info@cpc.ny.gov>

Subject: FURTHER NOTICE & grand jury/public corruption complaint: Your April 1, 2026 2% D.A. salary increases, the "false instrument" Dec 4, 2023 Report on which they are based, & other larcenies & violations of penal laws by NYS' highest public officers

TO: District Attorneys Association of the State of New York (DAASNY)

ATT: President/Rensselaer County District Attorney Mary Pat Donnelly

Above-attached is CJA's NOTICE & grand jury/public corruption complaint pertaining to "Your April 1, 2026 2% D.A. salary increases", the 'false instrument' December 4, 2023 Report on which they are based, and other grand larcenies of the public fisc and violations of penal laws by NYS' highest public officers

for inquiry by grand juries pursuant to Article I, §6 of the NYS Constitution – and, specifically, pertaining to the FY2026-27 state budget”.

As stated,

“I am ready, immediately, to appear, under oath, before grand juries, so that they can discharge their constitutional function pursuant to [Article I, Section 6 of the New York State Constitution](#)^{fn7} and their statutory duties pursuant to [Criminal Procedure Law Article 190](#), including [§190.85](#) for a “grand jury report”,^{fn8} Please advise as to the arrangements you will be making to enable me to do so, consistent with your own constitutional and statutory duties pursuant to [Article XIII, §§1, 13\(b\) of the State Constitution](#) and [County Law §700.1](#): “...it shall be the duty of every district attorney to conduct all prosecutions for crimes and offenses cognizable by the courts of the county for which he or she shall have been elected or appointed...’.

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE, both with respect to the FY2026-27 state budget and this year’s elections for governor, attorney general, comptroller, all 213 legislative seats, judges – and for D.A.s. in at least seven counties.^{fn9} (bold in the original, pp. 4-5)

To the herein cc’d [New York State Commission on Prosecutorial Conduct](#), please forward to those Commission members whose e-mail addresses I do not have: former Judges Eng, Obus, and Dougherty, and Commission Member Loigman.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
www.judgewatch.org
914-421-1200
elena@judgewatch.org