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**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2026 5:10 PM  
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**Subject:** **TIME-SENSITIVE: The Corruption of the Legislative Budget & State Budget by Senator Stewart-Cousins & Westchester's Other State Legislators -- & the 2026 Elections**

**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](#)

Westchester's state legislators have been corrupting their offices, for years, and continue to do so, in tandem with the state legislators of NY's 61 other counties, because there has been NO reporting by Gannett & other New York press of the situation, involving the corruption of all ethics and criminal entities having jurisdiction over them.

So that you can get started with reporting on the latest – in discharge of your First Amendment responsibilities to inform the public of what their public officers have been doing – below is my EVIDENCE-laden today's e-mail entitled: "Questions & FOIL/Records Request about the Senate's Non-Transparent Legislative 'Process' with Respect to the FY2026-27 State Budget" – sent to ALL NY's 63 state senators. Of the five with Westchester districts: [Nathalia Fernandez](#) (SD34), [Andrea Stewart-Cousins](#) (SD35), [Jamaal Bailey, Esq.](#) (SD36), [Shelley Mayer, Esq.](#) (SD37), and [Pete Harkham](#) (SD40), Stewart-Cousins is the most important as she is Temporary Senate President, paid an [additional \\$41,500](#) on top of her \$142,000 legislative salary.

My comparable EVIDENCE-laden e-mail to NY's 150 state assemblymembers entitled "Questions & FOIL/Records Request about the Assembly's Non-Transparent Legislative 'Process' with Respect to the FY2026-27 State Budget" is [here](#). Of the seven with Westchester districts: [Amy Paulin](#) (AD88), [J. Gary Pretlow](#) (AD89), [Nader Sayegh, Esq.](#) (AD90), [Steven Otis, Esq.](#) (AD91), [MaryJane Shimsky, Esq.](#) (AD92), [Chris Burdick](#) (AD93), and [Dana Levenberg](#) (AD95), the most important is Pretlow, as he is chair of the Ways & Means Committee, with primary responsibility for the budget, paid an [additional \\$34,000](#) on top of his \$142,000 legislative salary.

Please confirm that you will be getting answers to these e-mails from the 12 Westchester state legislators – beginning with Temporary Senate President Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Ways & Means Committee Chair Pretlow, both of whom are running for re-election, as are most of the 12 – and reporting on those answers.

Suffice to add, my today's e-mails to all legislators were preceded by my January 28<sup>th</sup> e-mails to them ([here](#) & [here](#)) entitled "Questions about the Legislature's FY2026-27 Budget & the Legislative Portions of the Governor's Legislative/Judiciary Budget Bill #S.9001/A.10001", attaching, for them to also answer in discharge of their duties, my [January 28<sup>th</sup> letter to Stewart-Cousins, with its 40 questions](#) – and this

is recited at page 3 of my [written testimony for the Legislature's February 11<sup>th</sup> budget hearing on "local government officials/general government"](#).

I am available to answer questions and to assist you to the max. Feel free to call me, no matter how early or late – and on the weekend. Needless to say, TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE, both with respect to the FY2026-27 budget and this year's elections.

Thank you.

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**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2026 10:51 AM

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**Subject: Questions & FOIL/Records Request about the Senate's Non-Transparent Legislative "Process" with Respect to the FY2026-27 State Budget**

TO: [Temporary Senate President Andrea Stewart-Cousins & the 62 Other Members of the NYS Senate](#)

According to the Senate webpages for Governor Hochul's ten budget bills comprising her Executive Budget, on March 9<sup>th</sup> the Senate "amended" eight of the bills – the same eight as the Governor had amended on February 20<sup>th</sup> by her 30-day amendments. The bills, which became:

- [State Operations Budget Bill – S.9000B](#)
- [Aid to Localities Budget Bill – S.9003B](#)
- [Capital Projects Budget Bill – S.9004B](#)
- [Public Protection Budget Bill – S.9005B](#)
- [Education, Labor, Housing, & Family Assistance – S.9006B](#)
- [Health & Mental Hygiene – S.9007B](#)
- [Transportation, Economic Development, & Environmental Conservation – S.9008B](#)
- [Revenue Budget Bill – S.9009B](#),

were, from the time of their introduction in January, committed to the Finance Committee, whose meetings are live-streamed and recorded. [The Finance Committee did not meet on March 9<sup>th</sup>](#) – and nothing pertaining to the budget took place in the [13-minute March 9<sup>th</sup> Senate floor proceedings](#). Notably, the Senate webpages for the bills show no votes – and none are furnished by Temporary Senate President Stewart-Cousins' March 10<sup>th</sup> "One-House Budget Resolution", [R-1722](#).

How then did the Senate "amend" the aforesaid eight budget bills on March 9<sup>th</sup> – and by what votes of the senators?

As for [Governor Hochul's Legislative/Judiciary Budget Bill S.9001/A.10001](#), which, like her [Debt Service Budget Bill S.9002/A.10002](#), the Senate did not amend, please advise why you have not amended it, notwithstanding **larcenies of scores, if not hundreds, of millions of dollars** were particularized by my [January 28<sup>th</sup> questions to Temporary Senate President Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Heastie](#) and my [January 26<sup>th</sup> FOIL/records request to Chief Administrative Judge Zayas](#) and its [February 6<sup>th</sup> supplement](#) – embodied by my [February 11<sup>th</sup> written testimony](#) for the Legislature's budget hearing on "local government officials/general government" and [February 12<sup>th</sup> written testimony](#) for the Legislature's budget hearing on "public protection".

Who, if anyone, made findings of fact and conclusions of law with respect to these two sets of written questions and two written testimonies, what were they, and at which Senate committee meetings – or closed-door party conferences – were they discussed?

Likewise, who, if anyone, made findings of fact and conclusions of law with respect to my [February 24<sup>th</sup> written testimony](#) for the Legislature's February 24<sup>th</sup> budget hearing on higher education, what were they, and at what Senate committee meetings – or closed-door party conferences – were they discussed?

**By copy of this e-mail to the Secretary of the Senate, who functions as your FOIL/records access officer, I request records responsive to the foregoing pursuant to [Senate Rule XIV "Freedom of Information"](#). Additionally, please furnish a copy of Temporary Senate President Stewart-Cousins' signed March 10<sup>th</sup> Introduction of Resolution form, comparable to that of [Assembly Speaker Heastie](#), as the [Senate webpage for R.1722](#), although appearing to post a pdf, does not.**

Finally, I take this opportunity to point out that rivalling the mystery as to how eight of Governor Hochul's ten budget bills were "amended" on March 9<sup>th</sup> – five of which were her so-called "Article VII Bills" – is the mystery of how these five "Article VII Bills", which the Governor presented as **draft bills**, requiring Senate and Assembly sponsors, morphed into **actual bills**, without Senate and Assembly sponsors, allegedly submitted by her "pursuant to article seven of the Constitution" – the subject of my [January 23<sup>rd</sup> FOIL request](#). The Senate's [January 30<sup>th</sup> response](#), the Assembly's [February 2<sup>nd</sup> response](#), the Legislative Bill Drafting Commission's [January 27<sup>th</sup> response](#), and the Division of the Budget's [January 26<sup>th</sup> response](#) were that they had no responsive records. The Governor's deceitful [January 29<sup>th</sup> response](#), purporting I had not requested records, is the subject of my pending [February 28<sup>th</sup> appeal](#).

Thank you.

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