

Rensselaer County Legislature

OFFICE of the MINORITY

March 13, 2008

Pulse of the People
The Record
501 Broadway
Troy, NY 12180

Never Was A Bed Tax Increase

Dear Editor,

Thomas Lane recently signed a letter in this newspaper that was not based on fact. Readers should know that Mr. Lane is a Troy DPW employee. His boss is Bob Mirch who seems intent on perpetuating a lie to the public.

Unless Mr. Mirch intends to file legislation increasing the county's bed tax, there has been NO such proposal introduced to date. In fact, Legislator Peter Grimm proposed that a portion of the EXISTING bed tax be used to promote tourism -- an industry that brings revenue to Rensselaer County and its municipalities. It's an idea that is supported by residents and business owners in Rensselaer County because they know that for every \$1 invested in tourism, \$7 goes into the local economy.

I think people are disillusioned by public officials who abuse their power. Mr. Mirch seems to think it's OK to send out false press releases, write erroneous letters, and force employees to sign letters containing absolute lies. He needs to be called on such out-of-control behavior and stopped.

There were seven non-political people in attendance at the meeting of the County Legislature's Arts, Culture, and County Heritage Committee who can testify that it was Bob Mirch who mentioned legislation increasing the county's bed tax, not Peter Grimm. These tourism professionals are frustrated that the County's GOP administration and legislature refuse to dedicate a portion of the existing bed tax for tourism. This tax is paid by people VISITING Rensselaer County, not county taxpayers. Other counties dedicate some of their bed tax to tourism and Rensselaer County should, too.

In the future, Mr. Mirch, if you want to write fiction --- write a novel.

Sincerely,

Keith Hammond

Keith Hammond, County Legislator
East Greenbush, North Greenbush, Poestenkill