

NEWS RENSSELAER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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March 8, 2007

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Democrats Call For Public Integrity Unit Gets Bipartisan Approval

A Democratic initiative calling for the creation of a Public Integrity Unit in the Rensselaer County District Attorney's Office was passed out of two committees with bipartisan support and will be voted on at Tuesday's 6 PM meeting of the Rensselaer County Legislature.

The measure, sponsored by District 2 Legislator Kevin Harrington, a member of the Legislature's Judiciary Committee, is intended to investigate municipal corruption throughout Rensselaer County and modeled after Albany County District Attorney David Soares' office. Harrington says he's grateful the measure has earned bipartisan approval in committee.

Harrington noted District Attorney David Soares has partnered with newly elected Attorney General Andrew Cuomo to ensure that greater law enforcement resources are available to pursue such investigations within Albany County's jurisdiction. "I am confident that Attorney General Cuomo's message that pursuit of municipal corruption is a high priority, applies to every county in this State." Harrington hopes that a partnership with the Attorney General could be formed with the Rensselaer County District Attorney's Office and its "Public Integrity Unit" once created.

Harrington believes funding for such units will be forthcoming from Cuomo's office and, therefore, would not be a burden to county taxpayers.

"Rensselaer County government must address all challenges to the integrity of local government to protect the taxpaying public from acts of fraud and abuse. I believe there is no better mechanism to serve as an investigatory tool and deterrent than the creation of a Public Integrity Unit in the Rensselaer County District Attorney's Office."

"Given the fact that a Federal Investigation is currently underway involving a political figure from Rensselaer County surrounding activities within this county, there is little doubt that a Public Integrity Unit could be a valuable deterrent to acts of municipal corruption," stated Harrington.