

8/3/2016

Sheila Birnbaum  
Chair  
NYS Commission on Legislative, Judicial and Executive Compensation  
64 Beaver Street, Box 454  
New York, NY 10004

Dear Ms. Birnbaum,

I am extremely concerned with plans to give legislators a pay increase, and urge you and the Commission on Legislative, Judicial and Executive Compensation to hold off on increasing the taxpayer funded salaries of our state legislators. Over the past few years, we have seen elected official after elected official convicted of corruption, monetizing their office and refusing to reform how Albany operates. Despite these repeated arrests, convictions and ethics scandals, legislators like Senator Bill Larkin, have refused to take real steps to clean up state government, and even went so far as to defend the corrupt status quo. The simple fact of the matter is our State Legislators do not deserve a raise and they must prove themselves to the voters before there is any further discussion about pay increases.

Despite mounting calls over multiple legislative sessions, Senator Bill Larkin and the Senate Republicans have continued to block meaningful ethics reforms and efforts to clean up New York's broken campaign finance system. Additionally, Senator Larkin is amongst a group of legislators who are gaming the system by drawing a legislative pension and a legislative salary simultaneous, thereby being paid two salaries for the same job. To give legislators like Bill Larkin a pay raise would be an insult to the taxpayers and I urge you to agree with me that these elected officials simply do not deserve a raise.

It is frustrating and disturbing that the same legislators like Senator Bill Larkin, who has fought ethics reforms for decades, are trying to sneak themselves a pay increase. The voters have demanded real reforms to clean up Albany, and yet those calls have fallen on deaf ears as Bill Larkin and his colleagues have refused to act. That is why I urge you to block any efforts to increase legislative salaries until the State Legislator proves it understands the ethics crisis gripping Albany and acts to address it.

Sincerely,

Chris Eachus

CC:  
Hon. Barry A. Cozier (Ret.)  
Roman B. Hedges  
Mitra Hormozi

Gary Johnson  
Hon. James J. Lack (Ret.)  
Fran Reiter