

September 21, 2016

TO OUR LEGISLATORS,

We are the 6 account clerks in the Comptroller's office who on Thursday, September 15 thought we were terminated from Onondaga County employment with no prior notice. We were called into a room, and told our positions were eliminated from County Executive's 2017 budget. We were devastated. We called our union who promptly called our Personnel department and they informed our union representative, that we were not in fact losing our jobs, but being moved.

Where does respect and common workplace employer courtesy and just human decency come into play to have us find out this way? We are hardworking, loyal employees who take what we do very seriously. We have families, children and many obligations. Think how you would feel if you looked at your personal line item on the new budget and it simply reads **Legislator -1 ?**

No one from the County Executive's Office or Finance has ever come to ask us what we do. We certainly know from reading news articles, watching television and reading minutes of the legislative meeting, that people making these decisions about us, have no idea what we do. They are making an uninformed decision and asking you to make one as well. We ask you to please take the time to find out exactly what it is we do, and why we are an important part of the Comptroller's Office.

We work extremely hard for Onondaga County, auditing over 3,000 employee's payroll information every single pay period. Before each biweekly payroll we sort through stacks of reports and tens of thousands of pieces of paper, we then analyze the data. We go through this same process 3 times for each payroll as a preaudit and then again when payroll is finalized to see if all errors were corrected. We go over the payroll information for each employee checking for errors that are mostly due to data entry. Errors that won't be caught by a payroll system because a computer system won't know incorrect spelling, incorrect dates or even if a decimal point was out of place. They also wouldn't know if the information on the paperwork an employee fills out was even correct to begin with. This is information we must know, and if we think something is not right, we find out and make sure it gets corrected. We each look at thousands of lines on many, many reports for all the departments in Onondaga County.

We strongly feel our jobs are an important part of the Comptroller's mission of oversight. We have an extreme amount of knowledge and over 70 years of experience with Onondaga County between us. We work hand in hand with all departments, with payroll clerks and department supervisors to ensure that their payrolls are correct. It is a painstaking, precise job that we do very well.

Over the years we have been given additional tasks. These might not appear to be payroll audit functions, but regardless of where the data is entered, they need our audit function to make sure they are entered correctly for each employee they impact. We handle all three Deferred Compensation plans, garnishments from Family court to tax liens to higher education loans, for all Onondaga County employees. We handle NYS Retirement as it impacts our employees and our County as a whole. We

spend countless hours filing reports and making adjustments to ensure all employees NYS retirement information is correct.

We find numerous errors every payroll period, all affecting Onondaga County employees and some that affect the county as a whole, some large and some small. Errors such as incorrect amounts of payments, someone getting 7,222.12 hours times their hourly wage instead of \$7,222.12. Missing information, incorrect spelling, incorrect addresses, wrong W-4 information, wrong dates affecting accruals and benefits, etc., etc.

We add value to Onondaga County in our positions in the Comptroller's office. Please think carefully and take the time to make an informed decision. Please realize that our payroll auditing function has been in the Comptroller's Office for over 5 decades.

You might think that this is just a move of 6 account clerks, but you would be minimizing our function in the larger picture of the fiscal operations of Onondaga County.

We welcome your questions, and ask that you come anytime and see what we do.

Respectfully,

Erica O'Brien, Account Clerk III

Erica H O'Brien

Jacki Copani, Account Clerk II

Jacki Copani

Kim Cassidy, , Account Clerk II

Kim Cassidy

Robert Baniak, , Account Clerk II

Robert Baniak

Kathleen Legault, , Account Clerk II

Kathleen M Legault

Dan Vadala, , Account Clerk II

Dan Vadala