



Robert E. Antonacci II, CPA
Comptroller

COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

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NEWS RELEASE

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County Comptroller Robert E. Antonacci Speaks Out on Revenge Budget

Syracuse, NY – Robert Antonacci’s reaction to County Executive’s Tentative Budget was swift and direct. “The County Executive gutted my office. She is firing fiscal watchdogs because she doesn’t like to be held accountable,” said Antonacci. “We are bound by our Charter and Code to audit and certify all payments the County is responsible for, including payroll. How can I carry out my duties if she fires payroll auditors?” asked Antonacci. “The basic fact is the County Executive does not want oversight,” continued Antonacci.

The County Executive’s Tentative Budget cut six positions, all in the Comptroller’s payroll pre-audit staff (see Section 3, page 9 of the Tentative Budget.) “Those dedicated public servants represent 29% of the Comptroller’s salary budget,” continued Antonacci. “These employees provide an invaluable service to the taxpayer by making sure the payroll is true and accurate. Every day, these people are correcting errors and saving taxpayers money,” said Antonacci.

“For the last six years the Administration has told us that PeopleSoft will be able to do the job my staff performs. PeopleSoft is not functioning and is still no closer to going live than it was when these promises were made. This project has been a debacle. Besides that, Deputy County Executive William Fisher has not explained how a software program will be able to detect and correct the mistakes in input caused by human error. We need eyeballs on the numbers and my staff has and will continue to provide oversight and accountability,” said Antonacci.

Antonacci concluded by saying he believes this is merely retribution for the pay-raise lawsuit. “Yes, I certainly think the lawsuit may have motivated this change. The overall County budget remains relatively flat, yet the Comptroller Department’s salary budget gets cut by 29%. It appears only one other Department (Metropolitan Water Board) had positions eliminated. We were never consulted on this change and we obviously did not request it. So yes, I think revenge is certainly a possibility.”

For further information regarding the proposed budget, contact Robert Antonacci II, CPA at (315) 435-2130.