



ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

HON. JOSEPH C. LORIGO
10TH DISTRICT LEGISLATOR
MINORITY LEADER

April 16, 2018

Peter Savage
Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street – 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

Dear Chairman Savage,

As you are aware, we are currently awaiting results of an RFP to hire outside counsel to perform an independent investigation into the Department of Social Services surrounding the resignation of Mr. Dirschberger, and to examine allegations made regarding the events that led up to his alleged rape of a fellow employee. The Legislature unanimously approved the need for an independent investigation, and I believe we should let that investigation conclude. As a result, I have written to the County Executive and requested he hold Marie Cannon's appointment until the independent investigation is complete.

Ms. Cannon may be highly qualified, have properly reported any complaints, or not even been privy to any information about the Mr. Dirschberger's behavior. However, I believe it would be premature to approve her appointment, especially as the focus of the Legislature-supported independent investigation surrounds the activities of the Department of Social Services, its management, and practices as a whole.

I believe it is prudent to allow the independent investigation to conclude, so that the Legislature can review its findings. There is no harm in Ms. Cannon remaining as interim commissioner while that investigation takes place. There is precedent for long-running interim commissioners even within the current administration.

In the event that the County Executive does not withdraw Ms. Cannon's nomination prior to the expiration of 30 days, I ask that as Chair of the Legislature, you join me in rejecting her appointment until the independent investigation is complete. After that, I look forward to a vote on Ms. Cannon's appointment, with all the facts and relevant information coming to light.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph C. Lorigo".

Joseph C. Lorigo