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February 24, 2011

Robert M. Graber
 Clerk of the Legislature
 92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
 Buffalo, NY 14202

RE: Letter of Interest Concerning Participation in the
 Erie County Community Corrections Advisory Board

Dear Mr. Graber:

I would like to hereby respectfully express my interest in participating as a member of the Erie County Community Corrections Advisory Board. I have kept abreast of the developments relating to the Erie County Holding Center and the Erie County Correctional Facility and I strongly believe that the Advisory Board could be a useful instrument for the purpose of formulating and providing suggestions and advice relating to the improvement of the programs offered at those facilities, as well as the safety of Correctional Officers and individuals housed at those facilities.

By way of background, I am a Senior Partner with the firm of Lipsitz Green Scime Cambria, LLP and a lifelong resident of Erie County. The focus of my legal practice has been state and federal criminal trials and appeals, as well as constitutional law, including First Amendment and Civil Rights cases brought pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §1983. As a practicing criminal defense attorney for over 21 years, I have represented many clients who have spent significant amounts of time at both the Erie County Holding Center and Erie County Correctional Facility. Based on many discussions with those clients, as well as the time that I have spent at those facilities in conference with those clients, I feel as though I have insight into issues relating to the conditions at those facilities. I have also spent time with clients housed at various detention facilities in other counties and states, as well as federal detention centers. As a result, I believe that I can relay experiences from my clients and myself, which would be relevant to the programs offered at both the Erie County Holding Center and Erie County Correctional Facility.

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Furthermore, as an Erie County and New York State taxpayer, I would look forward to working with the Advisory Board to formulate and offer suggestions and advice for the improvement of programs at both the Erie County Holding Center and Erie County Correctional Facility.

I greatly appreciate the time that you have taken to review of my respectful request.

Very truly yours,

Lipsitz Green Scime Cambria LLP

Barry Nelson Covert

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