



ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER

HON. STEFAN I. MYCHAJLIW

November 16th, 2020

Hon. April Baskin
Erie County Legislature Chairwoman
92 Franklin Street
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Chairwoman Baskin,

It has come to the attention of the Office of Erie County Comptroller via our Whistleblower Hotline that it is believed that a high-ranking Commissioner in the Administration of Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz has tested positive for COVID-19. If accurate, this should be a serious concern not only to fellow Erie County employees, but to you and your Honorable Body and Mr. Poloncarz. It is our understanding this individual came in contact with your members after this person attended Legislature Committee meetings on Thursday November 12th, 2020.

Our Whistleblower also states the Commissioner had a private meeting with the Erie County Executive just prior to his positive COVID diagnosis, and a county employee working closely with them in their office is also exhibiting COVID related symptoms.

A positive COVID test is not uncommon for Erie County employees. What is concerning is the silence and secrecy surrounding positive COVID tests amongst the workforce. On May 15th, 2020 I communicated with the Administration about the importance of working remotely to limit the spread of COVID. More than one month ago, on October 6th, 2020, I requested information from our Health Department pertaining to outbreaks amongst county employees. Our questions are not being answered while COVID cases are increasing throughout the community.

Further questions now remain pertaining to this potential positive COVID test for a Commissioner of the Erie County Executive, especially considering they came in contact with Legislators and your staff. Were you notified by the Poloncarz Administration about any positive cases of COVID where the individual came in contact with the Legislature or attended the public Committee meeting on November 12th, 2020? If you were not notified, is there any concern on your behalf or any Legislator or staff member that you were not contacted about this positive COVID test? Many county employees are expressing serious concerns to my office that fellow co-workers are testing positive for COVID, yet they are not being notified by the Erie County Health Department, but are finding out through word of mouth amongst workers.

Thank you very much for your prompt attention to this very serious matter. My Office and my staff are readily available if you have any questions or if we can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

Stefan I. Mychajliw Jr.
Erie County Comptroller