



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

JAMES N. TEDISCO
Minority Leader

September 12, 2008

The Honorable Thomas P. DiNapoli
New York State Comptroller
110 State Street
Albany, NY 12236

Dear Comptroller DiNapoli:

It has recently come to my attention that the New York State Commission on Local Government Efficiency and Competitiveness (a.k.a., the "Lundine Commission"), which submitted its final report back in April, continues to operate, utilizing its appropriation of \$400,000 and a four-member, professional staff.

I am asking that you, in your capacity as State Comptroller, investigate why this Commission continues to utilize taxpayer funds. I am sure you would agree, that at the very time New York faces serious fiscal challenges, as funding for programs and essential services are being reduced, now, more than ever, it is incumbent upon government to maximize efficiencies.

Clearly, having a Commission that already served its purpose – and issued a final report over four months ago – continue to operate with taxpayer dollars is an area warranting closer examination. This is not to trivialize the important work of the Commission, quite the contrary. I believe that allowing the Commission to continue operating with taxpayer monies, after it accomplished the task assigned to it by the previous Governor, undercuts the legitimacy of its recommendations aimed at reducing taxpayer costs and increasing governmental efficiency.

I am also requesting that your office promptly investigate if there are other such "ghost ship" commissions adrift across our state and to report on the scope of this potential problem. Additionally, I am seeking your support for my proposed application of an automatic "sunset" amendment to accompany the creation of any future commissions paid for by state taxpayers. Specifically, my amendment would call for the automatic abolition of commissions within 15 to 30 days after they have tendered their final report.

As you may know, our Assembly Minority Conference offered its bi-partisan cooperation to work with Governor David Paterson in addressing the state's daunting financial challenges. At a time when New York faces a serious fiscal crisis, I believe exploring the issue of commissions continuing to operate with taxpayer funds after they have concluded their work is worthy of our consideration.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request and your continued service to the taxpayers of New York State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim Tedisco".

James N. Tedisco
Assembly Minority Leader