



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

## Bonacic: Pass Scheiderman Ethics Bill (And Bring on the Grand Jury to Look at the Senate Democratic Leadership) - Now!

JOHN J. BONACIC October 22, 2010

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In the wake of the [bombshell report](#) released yesterday by State Inspector Joseph Fisch, which noted numerous improprieties by Democrats who rule State government, Senator John J. Bonacic (R/I/C – Mt. Hope), urged the Senate and Assembly be called back to Albany to pass anti-corruption legislation Bonacic is co-sponsoring.

The legislation (S.7707-a), which Bonacic partnered with Democratic Attorney General candidate Eric Schneiderman's to put forth, would substantially enhance the ability of District Attorneys to prosecute corruption in office.

Bonacic is a co-sponsor of the legislation. "The Democratic majorities are engaging in a farce when it comes to ethics reform. They passed a toothless wonder of an 'ethics' bill earlier this year, but refuse to entertain real, substantive legislation, sponsored by their very own attorney general candidate – who is running on a platform of cleaning up corruption," Bonacic said.

The Inspector General's report relates to improper activity connected to the awarding of a bid to AEG. The bid was for the operation of VLTs at the Aqueduct racetrack. The Inspector General's report implicates the Chairman of the Senate Racing, Wagering, and Gaming Committee – Sen. Eric Adams; along with the top two Democratic Senators – Senate President Malcolm Smith and Senate Democratic Conference Leader John Sampson.

The Inspector General's report "concludes that AEG should have been disregarded at the start, and that the chaotic process resulting in AEG's multi-billion dollar award was a 'political free-for-all' marked by unfair advantages and more than \$100,000 in campaign donations." [The donations were sent to Senate Democrats.](#)

Specifically, the Inspector General found of Senate Democrats:

- Senate Democratic leaders leaked bid analyses to AEG lobbyists which gave them an advantage;
- Senator Sampson, the Senate Democratic Leader, likely pressured AEG to include a New York City contractor in the deal before he would select AEG as the winner.
- Senator Malcolm Smith, the Senate President, also a Democrat, maintained a façade of recusal from the process but still advocated for AEG.

Unfortunately, the only power the Inspector General has against the Democratic Senators – and all members of the Legislature, is to refer the matter to the Legislative Ethics Commission. That Commission is a notoriously hollow entity, which has failed to take any substantive action against any member of the State Legislature for decades – this, despite the fact that multiple legislators of both parties have been convicted of crimes relating to their time in public office.

The empty nature of the Legislative Ethics Commission is why Bonacic is advocating for the Schneiderman bill to be adopted. “The fact that Sen. Schneiderman’s fellow Democrats will not take a vote on the leading ethics reform bill – that their own nominee for attorney general sponsored, only to have this disastrous report come out from the Inspector General, which shows the Democratic majority is not remotely serious on ethics reform, speaks volumes about the sincerity of the reform mantle claimed by some in the Democratic majority,” Bonacic said.

Bonacic urged that Attorney General Andrew Cuomo immediately launch an investigation into the AEG bid rigging scandal. “Attorney General Cuomo is beyond reproach when it comes to ethics. He has offered a substantive reform plan in his campaign for Governor. He has a sterling record of prosecuting corruption as Attorney General. I respectfully urge him to take the reins in this stunning scandal, and determine what criminal implications may lie,” Bonacic said.

“In addition, I urge both Attorney General Candidates – Dan Donovan and Senator Schneiderman, to demand the legislature reconvene, while both houses still are under control of the same party – so there can be no partisan blame game. The leadership of both houses has the opportunity to take up and pass the Schneiderman bill now, and they should do so,” concluded Bonacic.

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