

## Assemblyman Wants Silver Out as Speaker

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Republican Assemblyman Steve Katz is circulating a letter to his colleagues asking them not to reelect Assemblyman Sheldon Silver as Speaker, a position Silver has held since 1994.

"Mr. Silver's actions in covering the sexual improprieties of Assemblyman Vito Lopez with taxpayer dollars by means of the 'Miscellaneous Contractual Services' account go against everything that we should be united against in a bipartisan manner," Katz writes. "While we may disagree on how to govern, the people of the state of New York deserve to have an open, honest, and transparent government."

Jimmy Vielkind of the Times Union [recently documented](#) how Silver and Assembly Democrats dodged any fallout from the Lopez scandal during the elections and actually added seats to their super-majority. It seems unlikely that Katz' effort will come to much but it keeps the scandal alive just a little bit longer. The matter is still reportedly being investigated by JCOPE.

Here is the full letter Katz is circulating among Assembly members:

To My Colleagues in the Assembly:

I write to voice my concern regarding our impending vote for leadership in the Assembly. In light of the events that have been revealed over the last six months, I believe that it hurts our credibility as an honest governing body with any sense of morality and decency to even consider nominating Assemblyman Sheldon Silver for the position of Speaker.

Mr. Silver's actions in covering the sexual improprieties of Assemblyman Vito Lopez with taxpayer dollars by means of the "Miscellaneous Contractual Services" account go against

everything that we should be united against in a bipartisan manner. While we may disagree on how to govern, the people of the state of New York deserve to have an open, honest, and transparent government.

If Assemblyman Sheldon Silver is re-elected as Speaker, then we are not only showing New York, but the rest of the nation, that we have no backbone, no moral compass, and no integrity when it comes to honest government. If Assemblyman Sheldon Silver is re-elected as Speaker, we are confirming New York's worst fears that its elected officials are above the law. I believe we are better than this.

At its core, this is a moral issue – not partisan. There is common ground for all of us to responsibly occupy. The Speaker's action to cover up numerous sexual indiscretions not only embarrasses the state and our government, but each one of us, as well. We cannot be expected to govern effectively and with the confidence of our constituents if Assemblyman Sheldon Silver is allowed to retain his position. His use of a taxpayer funded discretionary account to affect any sort of 'out of court settlement' is unconscionable, and this stain will mar every decision we make on behalf of our constituents for the next two years.

The citizens of New York deserve better from their public servants. And as public servants, we deserve better leadership, so that we can better represent our constituents.

Collectively, I believe we are above the actions of Assemblyman Sheldon Silver. I hope you will join me in electing a new Speaker so that we can turn the page on a sordid chapter in our state's history and work on fixing New York.

God Bless,

Assemblyman Steve Katz (AD94)

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