



STATE OF NEW YORK  
**OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
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**OFFICE OF THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION FRAUD INSPECTOR GENERAL**

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**LETIZIA TAGLIAFIERRO**  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

November 24, 2020

Basil Seggos  
Commissioner  
New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation  
625 Broadway  
Albany, New York 12233

Re: NYS IG 2327-001-2020

Dear Commissioner Seggos:

On October 19, 2020 the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) referred a complaint to the Office of the New York State Inspector General from former DEC Administrative Assistant [REDACTED] alleging time and attendance abuse, misuse of State resources, and mistreatment of employees by [REDACTED] the DEC regional director (DEC [REDACTED] DEC's Office of Internal Investigations (OII) had conducted a preliminary investigation of the complaint and found that [REDACTED] spent time during his DEC workday on outside activities and misused State resources for these activities.

Specifically, OII found that [REDACTED] participates in three outside activities. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] OII

found that although [REDACTED] received DEC approval for his [REDACTED] positions, he did not notify DEC for his involvement with [REDACTED] OII's comprehensive review of [REDACTED] time and attendance and use of State resources, including his State computer, telephone, email and printer, confirmed his use of State time and resources for his outside activities.

The Inspector General's review found that [REDACTED] is a not-for-profit organization that, in part, finances projects [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] According to the corporation's 2019 annual report, [REDACTED] has served on its board of directors from [REDACTED] and is currently [REDACTED]. The review also found that since the start of [REDACTED] employment with DEC in [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] board has passed resolutions approving bond financing for several projects located within Regional Director [REDACTED] jurisdiction of DEC [REDACTED]. Notably, as DEC regional director, [REDACTED] has the authority to review and approve permit applications and assessments required by the State Environmental Quality Review Act, for projects within his region. [REDACTED] duties and responsibilities as a DEC regional director and an [REDACTED] board member may pose a conflict of interest.

Given these findings, I recommend that DEC review [REDACTED] activities as a board director for [REDACTED] for potential conflicts with his job duties and responsibilities as a DEC regional director. DEC should also consult with the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics regarding [REDACTED] outside activities. I also recommend that DEC take any administrative action it deems appropriate for his time and attendance irregularities and his use of State resources for his outside activities. I further recommend that DEC refer the allegations of employee mistreatment to the Governor's Office of Employee Relations.

Please advise me of any action taken by DEC in response to these recommendations within 45 days of the date of this letter. If you require further information, please contact Deputy Inspector General Lynn Tabbott at 518.474.1010.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Letizia Tagliafierro  
Inspector General

Cc: Thomas Berkman, Esq.  
Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]