



Laura Belin <desmoinesdem@bleedingheartland.com>

more Qs regarding use of CARES Act funds

Laura Belin <desmoinesdem@bleedingheartland.com>

Thu, Oct 22, 2020 at 12:26 PM

To: "Garrett, Pat" <pat.garrett@iowa.gov>, sara.craig@iowa.gov

Circling back on this. In what way did you "confirm" with Treasury's OIG the use of CARES Act funds for staff salaries, as David Pitt paraphrased Sara as saying on September 16?

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Laura Belin** <desmoinesdem@bleedingheartland.com>

Date: Thu, Sep 17, 2020 at 10:01 AM

Subject: more Qs regarding use of CARES Act funds

To: <sara.craig@iowa.gov>, Garrett, Pat <pat.garrett@iowa.gov>

Dear Sara and Pat,

Apparently you told reporters yesterday that your office "confirmed" the use of CARES Act expenditures with the U.S. Treasury's inspector general:

<https://apnews.com/490886309a91aaaaeae78e57eb36145d>

Please provide a copy of your communication with federal officials on this subject.

When did you communicate with the Treasury's IG about this? Was it before the end of the 2020 fiscal year? Or after I started asking questions this use of the CARES Act funds? Or after I published my post on September 13?

My understanding of the federal guidance is that government employees need to be doing substantially different jobs to justify using CARES Act money to cover their salaries. Can you be more specific about how the 21 staffers' work was "substantially different" from March through June? It appears that many staff in the governor's office were doing the same jobs that were already budgeted for (chief of staff, communications director, public relations manager, legal counsel etc).

What happened to the state funds that were budgeted to cover the governor's office expenses during FY2020? Was that \$2.3 million all used for salaries and benefits during the last fiscal year? In other words, did the governor's office need the \$448,449 in CARES Act funds as well as the full \$2.3 million appropriated by the legislature, just to keep paying all the staff who were already in place before the pandemic?

Governor Reynolds said during Wednesday's news conference that you didn't think it was fair to keep charging state agencies for staff salaries once people were focused on COVID-19. Yet the Department of Management confirmed that the Department of Administrative Services has covered 100 percent of Paul Trombino's salary and benefits since March 7. Why not charge part of his compensation to the CARES Act funding as well?

Finally, according to the Associated Press article, you said this use of funds hadn't been announced because Governor Reynolds hadn't signed the transfers yet. But some other CARES Act expenditures were announced publicly before all of the money was disbursed. For instance, the governor's office revealed plans to allocate \$125 million to reimburse local governments well before any money was transferred for that purpose. Why not inform the Legislative Services Agency and others about plans to use a portion of the funding for the governor's office?

Thanks in advance for any clarification you can provide.

Yours,

Laura

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