

House Republican Press Release

January 29, 2007
Press Office: 860-240-8700

HOUSE REPUBLICANS CITE WORKPLACE HARASSMENT, DEMAND FIRINGS OF TWO DEMOCRATIC LEGISLATIVE EMPLOYEES



HARTFORD – State Capitol Police have launched an investigation after two Democratic employees were caught on tape last week rifling through the desk and workspace of an assistant Republican clerk after hours, prompting House Republicans today to demand that the two employees be fired immediately.

The Government, Administration and Elections Committee assistant clerk who complained to police said she felt targeted and is now working in a hostile and threatening workplace environment. One of the Democratic employees is a GAE clerk and the other is assigned as a legislative aide in the Senate.

“The two employees were caught on tape by security cameras and for more than six minutes they can be seen rifling through her desk top and desk drawers, examining papers and removing some from her work area. Perhaps what is most disturbing is that they apparently did not care that their actions had been caught. I believe it is an act of overt harassment,” House Republican Leader state Rep Lawrence F. Cafero of Norwalk said after viewing the tape. “After all that we have been through in the last couple of years in trying to instill greater ethical standards in government some of our employees are subject to this kind of abhorrent, thuggish behavior? It’s outrageous.”

The committee is responsible for investigating and writing laws to police the ethical workings of the legislature and governmental bureaucracy. Cafero called for a separate inquiry to determine the motives and actions of two employees one of whom reports to GAE House Chairman Rep. Christopher Caruso of Bridgeport and Senate Chairman Gayle Slossberg of Milford.

The tape was examined last Thursday by police. The clerk said she became alarmed when she reported for work Thursday morning because the cubicle and desk had obviously been disturbed.

Under Section 8.2 of the State Employee Handbook titled, “Safety,” it says, “Acts of violence, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behaviors will not be tolerated.”

It goes on to state, “Anyone who is a recipient of, or witness to, acts of violence, threats of violence in the workplace should immediately report such conduct to his or her supervisor.”

Cafero said that he was concerned that others may have been aware of the situation and did nothing and are still working in the committee.

“This situation may not be resolved even if the two employees in question are terminated. We need to find exactly who was aware of what took place,” he said.