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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Statement by Citizens Union Executive Director Dick Dadey on JCOPE Substantial Basis Report Submission to Legislative Ethics Commission**

*Good Government Watchdog Group Will Continue to Closely Monitor Process as First-Ever "Test-case" Unfolds*

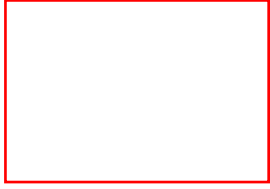
Citizens Union is pleased by this afternoon's first ever news that the Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE) has found a substantial basis to conclude that a member of the legislature or legislative employee has violated provisions of the Public Officers Law and is providing its report and findings to the Legislative Ethics Commission (LEC). This announcement is historic because it is the first time an investigation involving a legislator or legislative employee is being referred by JCOPE to the LEC. Such a step shows welcomed forward movement in new and independent ethics oversight of the New York State Legislature. The trust of the public in whether the state's new ethics law is effective relies on JCOPE's ability to conduct full and thorough investigations of all those who may have had a role in any violation of the Public Officers Law, as well as on the LEC's proper handling of the information it is provided in JCOPE's substantial basis report.

As required by the Public Integrity Reform Act of 2011, the LEC will release the report no later than 45 days from receipt, unless an extension of another 45 days is requested or it asks for JCOPE to do an additional investigation into the matter.

Citizens Union will continue to monitor closely the process and reserve our conclusions about the report until it has been resolved by the LEC and the ultimate disciplinary decision and report are made available to the public.

As we observe the unfolding of this investigation, Citizens Union is developing recommendations regarding the proper balance between protecting the integrity of the investigative process with the critical need for public transparency and accountability.

We will wait until this first "test case" has completely finished until issuing a final evaluation on the process and formal recommendations for improvement. But we are encouraged that the process as outlined in the 2011 ethics law is working as required.



[Citizens Union](#) is a nonpartisan good government group dedicated to making democracy work for all New Yorkers. Citizens Union serves as a civic watchdog, combating corruption and fighting for political reform. We work to ensure fair and open elections, honest and efficient government, and a civically-engaged public.

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