

OVERVIEW

The enclosed materials show that the Senate Majority Leader used state aircraft 11 times during the first five months of the year. The Governor used state aircraft 19 times during the same period. Lt. Governor Paterson accompanied the Governor on two of the Governor's trips, and used state aircraft on his own six times. The Assembly Speaker did not use state aircraft at all, nor did Attorney General Cuomo, Comptroller Dinapoli, Senate Minority Leader Malcolm Smith or Assembly Minority Leader Tedisco.

With regard to the Majority Leader, the records show that he and his senior staff routinely used the state helicopter for transportation to New York City (See manifests) where, on at least three occasions, they attended fund raising events. A review of itineraries shows that the primary if not sole purpose of these trips at state taxpayer expense was to attend political events. (See state police transportation assignments)

For example, on May 17th, the Majority Leader and senior staff traveled to the NYC for the Republican State Committee's annual fund raising dinner at the Sheraton Hotel. (See misc. docs file for invitation) The records show that the Majority Leader held a meeting at the office of a major campaign contributor and then went to the Sheraton for the political event.

On three other trips, the Majority Leader held a single meeting, usually with Mayor Bloomberg, (who happens to be his single largest campaign contributor) and then attended fundraisers.

This political activity would appear to conflict with restrictions in state law and policy that the state aircraft be used only for "official business." This political activity would also appear to conflict with the Majority Leader's written claim that the purpose of the trips was "legislative business meetings." (See flight requests file)

A close examination of the facts in this situation may reveal that there was little or no "legislative business" and that the Majority Leader may be guilty of both misrepresenting himself and misusing state assets.

As for the Governor's use of state aircraft, the records show that he used the aircraft to hold meetings and events that were clearly connected to his official duties. This includes making economic development announcements, meeting with local officials, and delivering remarks to local groups. With one exception, there are no political events on the schedule on days when state aircraft was used to transport the Governor. The only possible exception is April 10th, when the Governor was a speaker at a public event sponsored by the Monroe County Democratic Committee. This "drop by" was part of a full day of public events and meetings with local officials in Binghamton and Rochester.

The Governor did attend fund raising events during the five-month period, but always used private aircraft for such purposes. There are no instances when the Governor or Lt. Governor used state aircraft to attend fund raising events.

