



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

February 3, 2023

Senator Eric Wimberger and Representative Robert Wittke
Co-chairpersons of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear co-chairpersons Wimberger and Wittke, (CC: State Auditor Joe Chrisman)

We write today to formally request an audit of the Office of Special Counsel as created by the Wisconsin State Assembly Committee on Assembly Organization Ballot 21-06 ~ Authorization to designate special counsel, dated August 27, 2021.

We would like to discuss this request at the upcoming hearing of the Joint Audit Committee, scheduled for February 7, 2023.

Questions about the investigation's objective, the number of OSC staff, and details about OSC's accounting of taxpayers' funds remain unanswered. This lack of information gives the OSC and its investigation the appearance of an unaccountable, rogue, and partisan commission engaged in possible fraud, waste, and mismanagement.

Recently, we learned that the State Assembly has paid nearly \$1.5 million for private attorneys to handle lawsuits resulting from the OSC's mishandling of public records. This sum has continued to grow, and has now more than doubled the original cost of the investigation.

For the legislature and the taxpayers to have complete confidence that millions of taxpayer dollars have not been wasted, and that no possible illegal activity occurred at the OSC, we request an audit to provide answers to the following questions:

- What documentation exists outlining the OSC's formal mission or objective?
- Had the OSC or Michael Gableman entered into any other contracts or subcontracts, and what are the details of any such contracts?
- What are the expenses that were incurred and paid by the OSC or by the Wisconsin State Assembly on behalf of the OSC?
- What are the cash balances in any and all accounts associated with the OSC?
- How many people were on OSC's staff and what were their hiring and termination dates?
- Is there documentation of OSC's staff receiving reimbursement for expenses, health insurance coverage, retirement, or other benefits?
- What was the selection process used to hire these staff members?
- Were the staff's working hours verified and an accounting made of the requirements for work performed?

We look forward to obtaining this information and gaining greater transparency for the operations of the Office of Special Counsel.

Please contact us if there are any questions about this request. Thank you for your consideration.

Dianne Hesselbein
State Senator

Tim Carpenter
State Senator

Francesca Hong
State Representative

Ryan Clancy
State Representative