

**Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** Rosemary Lopiano [rlopiano@jorsm.com]  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Distressed Unit Appeals Board  
**Attachments:**

**Sent:** Mon 12/22/2008 1:35 AM

Dear Ms. Russo:

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to the City of Gary's appeal to the Distressed Unit Appeals Board.

The pattern in our city government has been one of corruption, nepotism, and bad choices. If the Distressed Unit Appeals Board approves the city's appeal it will only be contributing to the state of affairs which all too often rewards political supporters with unnecessary jobs and no bid contracts. These employees and contracts produce substandard work which make living in the city costly and difficult. In most cases we can not count on those in city government to do their jobs. I have given up calling the city asking about services; helping citizens is not part of the mentality of our city government. Giving more tax money to the city will not help us. It will only perpetuate a situation that needs to change.

Hard choices need to be made. There are only 10,000 students in our schools; down from a high of 40,000. Underutilized schools need to be closed, but political pressure keeps them open.

From house I see the street down which one of our municipal buses lines runs. I have never seen a full bus. At most I see four passengers; I often see buses with no passengers. I could give many more examples of the profound waste of tax money in Gary.

Property taxes on the land under my house went up 390% in 2007; I now pay \$8500 just for that land. That does not include the taxes on my house.

We in Gary are paying more than enough taxes and we hope that you support our effort to make the city live within its means.

Thank you,

Rosemary Lopiano

**Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** andrea basarich [abasarich@sbcglobal.net]

**Sent:** Mon 12/22/2008 8:40 AM

**To:** Russo, Stephanie

**Cc:**

**Subject:** Gary Indiana

**Attachments:**

I truly hope that you are reading all the emails that are coming to you. We are in a sad state up here but the only way to help us is to not help us until Rudy Clay steps down. He will not be happy until his pockets are overflowing with ill gotten gains. Thank you for your attention Andrea A. Basarich

**Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** Iris Louderman [ilouderman@thecarlton.net]

**Sent:** Mon 12/22/2008 9:50 AM.

**To:** Russo, Stephanie

**Cc:**

**Subject:** tax cap

**Attachments:**

Please do not allow the tax cap to be changed. The taxes are too high as it is (and why are they increasing the values??) and presents a real hardship to home owners. The city of Gary is poorly managed and the taxpaying citizens should not be forced to support an inept city government.

Thank you.

*Iris Cherisse Louderman*

*6146 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Pl.*

*Gary, IN 46403*

**Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** james mcclendon [jlmnlm@sbcglobal.net]

**Sent:** Mon 12/22/2008 11:56 PM

**To:** Russo, Stephanie

**Cc:**

**Subject:** Petition

**Attachments:**

Please think long and hard before seriously considering Gary's petition for more tax money. Our city government is not run efficiently, there has been little or no attempt to effectively downsize. We cannot layoff police and fireman while others do little or nothing yet retain their jobs.

Again please make any city and especially Gary accountable to the citizens/state before such requests are considered.

Thank you.

Noreen McClendon

**Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** pspassarelli@att.net [pspassarelli@att.net]

**Sent:** Tue 12/23/2008 11:02 AM

**To:** Russo, Stephanie

**Cc:**

**Subject:** Please, no new funds for Gary.

**Attachments:**

Dear Ms. Russo:

We are residents of Gary, IN and we are asking that you please do not give in to the city of Gary's request for additional funds. Gary will surely mismanage whatever you grant.

We have lived here for 38 years and mismanagement of this city has gotten worse every year.

The mayor has a chauffeured Hummer with bodyguards, acting as if he is the chief executive of a major viable city. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The city council has the same problem. The members have not gotten the message about money management. They take expensive trips and have other amenities as if they were running a "normal" city. All this is business as usual here in Gary.

For the property tax payers, it is a different story, especially those of us on a fixed income. We are already paying higher property taxes and cannot afford mismanagement as usual by the city of Gary. Please do not grant any additional funds this year because next year they will be back at your doorstep begging for additional funds. They need to become aware of the making and using of a budget within their means.

Sincerely,  
Peter and Phyllis Passarelli

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** andrea basarich [abasarich@sbcglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 5:32 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Fw: Pabey

How true this is. I lived at 8506 Locust for many years with my parents and the house in question was at one time owned by Bill and Annette Sarpos. Mr. Sarpos passed away some time ago but at one time Ennis Moore Realty had the listing for this house. He is lying.

--- On Mon, 12/29/08, nglenn <[nglenn@netnitco.net](mailto:nglenn@netnitco.net)> wrote:

**From:** nglenn <[nglenn@netnitco.net](mailto:nglenn@netnitco.net)>  
**Subject:** Fw: Pabey  
**To:** Undisclosed-Recipient@yahoo.com  
**Date:** Monday, December 29, 2008, 1:58 AM

----- Original Message -----

**To:** [nglenn@netnitco.net](mailto:nglenn@netnitco.net)  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 27, 2008 2:17 PM  
**Subject:** Pabey

The city knew all about King Georges place in Miller. It was supposed to be a secret. Even his wife didnt know about it. The electrical inspector for the city lives across the alley. Everybody was just following orders.

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** andrea basarich [abasarich@sbcglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 5:26 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Fw: King George's in the hood.

--- On Mon, 12/29/08, nglenn <[nglenn@netnitco.net](mailto:nglenn@netnitco.net)> wrote:

**From:** nglenn <[nglenn@netnitco.net](mailto:nglenn@netnitco.net)>  
**Subject:** King George's in the hood.  
**To:** Undisclosed-Recipient@yahoo.com  
**Date:** Monday, December 29, 2008, 2:32 AM

# Pabey says city did not do work

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[Comments](#)

December 25, 2008

By Andy Grimm and John Byrne  
Post-Tribune staff writers

EAST CHICAGO -- Mayor George Pabey denied Wednesday that city employees were on the clock when they renovated a home he and his daughter own in Gary's Miller neighborhood.

The Post-Tribune on Wednesday reported that federal agents were investigating allegations that East Chicago workers -- while on city time -- performed work at a house owned by Pabey and his daughter in the **8500 block of**

## **Locust.**

In a statement, Pabey said while some work was done by city employees -- as well as other contractors -- none of the work done by East Chicago employees was done during city work hours.

"Some of the work was done by employees who are friends" during off hours or weekends, city spokesman Damian Rico said Wednesday. "The mayor is not one to ask friends to -- to put someone in that position."

Rico declined to give the names of contractors or employees that worked at the house, which Pabey bought for \$67,000 in December 2007. Gary Building Department records do not show any permits for work at the Locust address after May 2003.

Any repair or renovation work worth more than \$300 requires a city permit and any contractor working in Gary must be licensed by the city.

Calling the article "an example of the lowest form of journalism," Pabey said the report incorrectly stated the Gary home receives a \$45,000 "homestead exemption" reduction on its assessed value for property tax purposes.

The article "insinuates that my daughter does not have the right to vote in East Chicago when in fact she does have the right because she lives in East Chicago," Pabey said in the statement.

Lake County property tax records show the property received a homestead exemption for the 2008 tax year, but that both the mayor's address and that of his daughter are listed on voter registration records as Pabey's longtime home in East Chicago. To receive such an exemption, a property's owner must reside there full-time.

"Neither the mayor or his daughter ever applied for a homestead exemption," Rico said.

Neighbors said Tuesday that there was a great deal of renovation at the house, including the installation of a new concrete driveway, and that Pabey stayed at the house regularly during the summer.

No one answered the door at the home Tuesday night and neighbors said they had seen no one at the house for weeks, if not months.

Rico declined to say whether anybody stays in the Locust Avenue house.

"The mayor is beyond frustrated right now," Rico said. "He has decided to let the statement stand on its own."

Contact Andy Grimm at 648-3073 or [agrimm@post-trib.com](mailto:agrimm@post-trib.com). Comment on this story at [www.post-trib.com](http://www.post-trib.com)



## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** Serena N. Brown [snorbrown@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 12:02 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Article on Gary Indiana  
**Attachments:** As a business owner in Gary.doc

I do not live in Miller, but I do live in Gary, IN. I live in Glen Park West. I, too, am appalled at the request of Mayor Clay for more money.

I have been voicing my opinion on various blogs that I have and commented on several articles as to my outrage of this Mayor's unscrupulous use of property taxes. In addition, to that I am equally appalled at the amount of taxes that I and all of the residents pay. We have the worst schools in Indiana and probably the country. In addition to that, we can not get trash picked up on trash day. The list of problems with this city goes on.

No, the fat is not cut Mr. Mayor when you are driving in a Hummer that I am sure that I pay for with my tax dollars. Fat, let's talk about paying your wife to sit on a board for the Genesis center or paying your son to take photos at town hall meeting. On by no means are you trim, Mr. Mayor.

Lastly, I would like to attach a letter that I wrote the Mayor about some of the very same things I mention here.

As a resident and business owner in Gary, I am very concerned about the rising property tax rate and its impact on my business and the residents of Gary. As a result of this concern, I attended the E3 conference held at the Northwest Indiana Forum in Portage, to learn more about the plight of the unusually high and unfair taxes that the residents of Gary are dealing with. I learned that we can not only help the residents of Gary combat the increasing property tax burden, but the city of Gary can benefit by incorporating a Sales Tax Increment Financing Addendum that will facilitate new economic growth in the stagnant areas of Gary. The Sales Tax Increment Financing Addendum is not without its flaws, but before I would recommend the incorporation of this tactic, the legislation of the Sales Tax Increment Financing Addendum must be changed to allow a city like Gary to benefit.

The other program that may benefit Gary is the Income Tax Financing Addendum. The problem with this program is at present it does not have any provisions for residents that are at or below the poverty level.

Even with all the information that was available at this conference if the individuals that are in the position to make the changes are not concerned then nothing will happen. Please remember that if the economic development of Gary is not quickly addressed, there will be no market in which to sell a home, and no city government needed. Please take into consideration the impending decline and plight of this city and take the necessary steps to improve the potential of this great city.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** Pamela Vance [pamv0329@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 28, 2008 10:07 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Cc:** Pamela Vance  
**Subject:**

12-28-2008

Dear Ms. Stephanie Russo

Rudy Clay is using terrorist tactics on the citizens of Gary by threatening to cut police and firemen if he (and the city of Gary) doesn't receive relief funds through the Indiana Distressed Unit Appeals Board. Yet he continues to take his \$31,000.00 salary from the Gary Sanitary District where he shows up maybe twice a year. At a town hall meeting on 12-15-08 Rudy Clay was asked if he would forego his annual Gary Sanitary District salary. His reply was "...God is good." He drives around the city in a chauffeured Hummer. It costs the Gary taxpayers \$5,000.00 a year for the Hummer lease when he could be driving his own vehicle at his own expense. I saw him at a local restaurant lately surrounded by bodyguards, I assume paid for by the city budget. His son, Rudy Clay, Jr., is still on the payroll of the Gary Sanitary District to take pictures at a yearly salary of over \$51,000.00. I can't imagine what pictures he could take that any taxpayer would want to see. You can go to the police station for a police report and see all these office workers, eating, chatting to each other, or on the phone. You have to stand and wait to be waited on because they are busy doing their own thing at taxpayer expense. There is redundancy everywhere in this city particularly in useless departments and city workers. The City Council continues to donate hundreds of thousands of dollars to pet projects and charities. I am sure most Gary residents were unaware of this until a recent series of articles in the Post Tribune newspaper. I also assume that this is taxpayer money. Why does the City Council have or need a budget anyway. City judge Deidre Monroe and City clerk Suzette Raggs continue to fuel their vehicles with gas paid for by the taxpayers even after Clay's July 1, 2008 gas cutoff date. Gas was to be pumped only for police and fire vehicles. It costs taxpayers \$30,000.00 a month to fuel up city employee vehicles. Monroe and Raggs also refused to cut the pay of their employees by 20%.

Please see the article by Rich James in the Post Tribune dated 8-22-08. He says Gary has 1,300 people on the payroll (in a city of less than 100,000 residents). This figure includes 250 police officers and 280 firefighters. It all averages out to 1 (one) city worker for every 75 residents. If that isn't pork, I don't know what is.

I say "NO" to any distressed funds until it is proven without a doubt that Rudy and his cohorts have cut the dead wood to the bone without touching the police and fire fighting forces. This city is already a well-known killing field, so why would you even think of cutting the very ones who actually protect and help the Gary residents. It would be a grave injustice to the Gary taxpayers to give Gary any additional money so Rudy Clay and his cronies can continue their inept business as usual.

Respectfully submitted by

Pamela J. Vance  
4754 Van Buren Street  
Gary, IN 46408  
[pamv032942@att.net](mailto:pamv032942@att.net)

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** sammjoe2426@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 28, 2008 7:17 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Gary Budget Woes

Gentlemen;

In the Sunday Post Tribune dated Dec. 28, 2008, there was an article titled, " NWI residents against state bailout for Gary", I agree.

I have been a resident of Gary for 20 years and before that in Chicago for 30 years and I've never seen such blatant and shameful theft by a city official, Mayor Rudy Clay, in my life. Mayor Clay claims he has trimmed the fat from the city payroll, that is an out and out **LIE**. All he has done is cut and disrupt city services at the cost of its residents. If the mayor really wants to trim the budget try getting rid of his son (who takes pictures of the mayor), the bodyguards (no one cares to approach you), and all your friends you packed the payroll with, I'd rather have the policemen, firemen, and garbage men back.

As Mayor Clay stated in an interview recently, "God has blessed me and He will continue to bless me". Mayor Clay, GOD does not bless liars or thieves, and you are both. Also, when asked to see the city payroll Mayor Clay stated, he doesn't have to show anyone the payroll. As a PUBLIC RECORD it should be available to anyone, that's of course if you haven't altered it.

Before the state considers giving Mayor Clay any money for Gary ask to see the city payroll and ask the "blessed" Mayor, **"WHY ARE YOUR FRIENDS AND SON STILL ON THE PAYROLL AND CITY WORKERS THAT ARE NECESSARY BEING FIRED"?**

The state should look closer into Gary spending before granting any monies.

Respectfully,  
Noreen Lee  
Gary Resident

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** Murphyle@aol.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 28, 2008 5:14 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Distressed Unit in Gary

Dear Members of the Distressed Unit Appeals Board:

I am writing this e-mail to encourage you to not award a property tax variance to Gary. I have been a resident here since 1991, and I do not believe that the current city administration has truly worked to cut out the waste in government. Instead of studying redundancies and asking department heads who was expendable, Mayor Clay cut fire and police services. I believe he did this as a red herring and also because many of these people are unable to vote for him. We will soon pay for garbage pickup as a cost saving measure. However, Mr. Clay stated that no city workers would lose their jobs over the privatization. How does this cut costs? Mr. Clay's own son receives a salary from the GSD for taking pictures of the mayor. This smacks of patronage and is an expense that is unnecessary. At this point, I feel the only way Gary's belt will truly be tightened is if you help us by not making a variance to increase the budget. It is obvious we need help, but allowing the fat and waste to continue will not help any of the residents in the long term. We need help in culling out the waste whether Mayor Clay wants to or not.

Thank you.

Linda Murphy  
8937 Lake Shore Drive  
Gary, IN 46403  
219-938-1997

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## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** Denise H. Little [dhlittle@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 28, 2008 4:35 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Gary Bailout

NO NO NO!!!!!!!!!!!! Gary doesn't need a bailout. They need to be put into receivership and hire a company that is not on the take or that will waste taxpayer's money. I remember when Gary was a city to be proud of. They have the possibility of coming back but not under any of the current leadership.

Please again do NOT bail out Gary!!!! They need to sink or swim on their own. If they sink, that will be the only way to rid that city of graft and corruption because there will be nothing left to steal.

Denise H. Little  
6874 Prairie Run Ave.  
Portage, IN. 46368  
219-929-7077

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** FunGrrl505@aol.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 28, 2008 3:12 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Property Taxes in Gary

I am also against the rise of Property taxes in Gary. My taxes have gone down since the Tax Cap the Governor ordered....If the taxes goes back up for hard working Homeowners such as my self..I would move right out of Gary and not return paying taxes that will be so ridiculously high. Now if Clay wants a **ghost town in Gary**..he will get it.... if Gary receive any more money than they are slotted to get....Perhaps, Gary management should have thought about the budget of Gary long before the Tax Caps were put in place...!!!!!!...NO NO NO NO!!!!!! APPEAL BOARDS.....SAY NO!!!!!!

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## **Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** John Ferree [johnferree@sbcglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 28, 2008 9:37 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Deny Gary's petition for relief

**As a twenty year resident of Gary, I am appalled by the arrogance and corruption of the current administration of Mayor Rudy Clay. His request for relief from the Distressed Unit Appeals Board is just the latest attempt by the Mayor to continue business as usual. He continues to appoint family and friends to paid positions in city government and his private cash cow, the Gary Sanitary District. The Sheraton Hotel fiasco is a perfect example of the capriciousness of this administration. This man has no clue or intention of fixing the problems of this once great city. The waste of vital financial resources is evident in every department of government. When opportunities arose to sell unused school properties to private entities the Mayor and School Board declined. We have now lost out on much needed revenue these sales would have generated and now are maintaining crumbling, useless buildings. When looking at the Mayors claim that his administration has cut expenses to the bone you only need to look at the number of city employees in relation to the number of Gary citizens. I suspect this ratio is way out of line when compared with any city, even in Lake County, that is operating in a fiscally responsible manner. I respectfully request that the Board decline Gary's request for relief.**

John Ferree  
8105 Oak Ave  
Miller Beach IN 46403  
219-938-4224 Home  
219-939-8810 Work  
219-939-8813 Fax  
219-670-0510 Cell  
[johnferree@sbcglobal.net](mailto:johnferree@sbcglobal.net)



## **Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** augdron@yahoo.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 28, 2008 6:49 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** A Chicago Sun-Times article from: augdron@yahoo.com

The following article from the Chicago Sun-Times has been forwarded to you by [augdron@yahoo.com](mailto:augdron@yahoo.com)

If you wish to stop receiving these articles, please contact the sender.

Comments from the sender:

signed ltr to be maild 12/29/08-Thanks for your concern for the people of NWI.

To read the full story, click here:

<http://www.post-trib.com/news/lake/1351787.gduab.article>

**Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** Maria Sanchez [maria\_d\_sanchez@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 27, 2008 11:17 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** No Bailout for Gary!

Dear Ms. Russo,

Please do not bailout Gary on January 5th. I am a citizen of Gary and I have not seen any improvements in our community in the past 2 1/2 years that I have lived here. Streets need to be repaved, trash was never picked up on time-nor completely picked up, tree trimmings in the dunes area have never been cleaned by the city, abandoned homes have not been torn down, etc.. etc... My list goes on and on. I wonder where our tax money has gone to???? It sure has not been in our community. Again I ask you please do not bail out Gary.

Best regards,

**María Sánchez**  
8141 Maple Ave.  
Gary, Indiana 46403

Cell:-773-225-6125

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** Chester Baran [chet1bar@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 26, 2008 11:24 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie

s. russo

i do not think it is in the best interests of the residents of gary to be 'bailed out' with any extension of revenue powers for the current administration. i consider the mayor to be incompetent and untrustworthy. so much of the administration and service personnel is built on cronyism and sweetheart deals that i think this network has to be broken up before any additional money is put into their hands. by starving this administration of funds we may be able to remove them from office.

i do not have any great trust in the daniel's administration either, but i have more concern in what i encounter locally. the reason i mention this is that other actions by the daniel's administration have affected income streams that should have made their way to our area because of economic activity in northwest indiana. don't deny us funding powers and then give them indiscriminately to other areas who may be just as abusive as we are and don't give these other areas monies that rightly belong to NW indiana.

sincerely,  
chester baran  
8800 maple ave  
gary, in 46403

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## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** peteriffle@sbcglobal.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 24, 2008 7:17 PM  
**To:** Congressman Pete Visclosky; Russo, Stephanie; nglenn  
**Subject:** Re: Fw: Hammond Times Editorial today

Bayh is a Blue Dog - don't count on him for anything.

--- On Wed, 12/24/08, nglenn <[nglenn@netnitco.net](mailto:nglenn@netnitco.net)> wrote:

**From:** nglenn <[nglenn@netnitco.net](mailto:nglenn@netnitco.net)>  
**Subject:** Fw: Hammond Times Editorial today  
**To:** "Congressman Pete Visclosky" <[pete.visclosky@congressnewsletter.net](mailto:pete.visclosky@congressnewsletter.net)>, [srusso@sba.in.gov](mailto:srusso@sba.in.gov)  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 24, 2008, 4:39 PM

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Barb Hansen  
**To:** nglenn  
**Cc:** Lee Botts ; Marilyn Krusas  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 24, 2008 11:31 AM  
**Subject:** Hammond Times Editorial today

This was in the editorial section of the Hammond Times this morning:

### Phone call could transfer federal dollars to Gary

BY DOUG ROSS

[doug.ross@nwitimes.com](mailto:doug.ross@nwitimes.com)

219.548.4360 | Wednesday, December 24, 2008 | [10 comment\(s\)](#)

When Evan Bayh was governor of Indiana, he came to Gary's rescue. If Mayor Rudy Clay plays his cards right, that might happen again.

In 1995, then-Mayor Scott King asked Bayh for help in bringing down the city's crime rate. Gary had the highest per-capita crime rate of any major city in the nation.

Bayh sent 50 Indiana State Police officers to patrol Gary's streets, giving the city time to hire and train new officers.

That was 13 years ago, and now Gary has more bad luck. The city is drowning in a budget quagmire.

Clay says when he took office, the city had to borrow money to pay off millions of dollars in past-due utility bills. All those years of poor financial decisions by past administrations -- and Clay's as well -- have finally caught up with the city government, thanks to the property tax caps being put in place by the Indiana General Assembly.

Meanwhile, the city has two big problems caused by its 4,000 to 5,000 derelict buildings. They are a magnet to crime, and they are a deterrent to economic development.

Blight feeds upon itself. Who wants to open a business -- unless it's illicit -- in the shadows of all those

economic failures?

Some of the downtown buildings are historic and protected by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Clay said the city is working out compromises with the DNR on those buildings.

But that still leaves thousands of other buildings with no such protection.

Clay put forward the idea of having the Indiana National Guard raze those abandoned buildings, but even though everyone seems to like the idea, the equipment to do the job is in Iraq, not Indiana.

Which brings us back to Bayh.

Bayh is an influential U.S. senator now and a force in the Indiana Democratic Party.

Bayh is helping put together a list of infrastructure and construction projects in Indiana that can get under way quickly if President-elect Obama's economic stimulus plan is approved.

Obama's philosophy, and Bayh's, is to spend federal money quickly to put Americans back to work on projects that will position the nation better for the future once the economy does bounce back.

Infrastructure and construction projects that don't require additional studies before work begins are expected to be a high priority.

If the National Guard can't tear down those buildings, why not private contractors using federal dollars?

Bayh told The Times this week that he likes this idea because it's a "twofer" -- it fights crime and increases the likelihood of economic development. And it puts Americans back to work.

But Bayh also said he hasn't been approached by Clay about this project.

If Clay needs it, I'd be happy to pass along that phone number. I want to see Gary thrive again. It could start with a simple phone call.

Hello Bayh, hello opportunity.

Editorial Page Editor Doug Ross can be reached at (219) 548-4360 or (219) 933-3357 or [doug.ross@nwtimes.com](mailto:doug.ross@nwtimes.com). The opinion expressed in this column is the writer's and not necessarily that of The Times.

Barb Hansen  
252 N Lake St.

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## **Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** David Schroeder [david@rhinoacquisitions.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 24, 2008 4:36 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** City of Gary Petition

Ms. Russo,

Please forward this to whomever is appropriate on the Distressed Unit Appeals Board.

I am writing in protest of the City of Gary's petition for relief from the property tax caps. First, if you have ever been to a city office in Gary you would understand that eliminating 59% of the City's payroll, as Mayor Clay suggests will be necessary, would bring the City to appropriate staffing levels. Also, the idea that landlords should pay a very significantly larger share of taxes than owner occupied homes is ridiculous and will lead to further deterioration of the City.

I have owned property in Gary for almost 10 years. Since the taxes have been increased to over 7% of value I am barely able to cover the mortgages on my rental units even though only 25% of them have any mortgage at all. In addition I can't sell them because no one will buy a rental house where the taxes are \$3000 on a house that isn't even worth \$30,000? Don't even think that it could be sold to an owner occupant. I've sold dozens of houses in Gary, I've never sold one to an owner occupant. People who can qualify for mortgages don't live in Gary. Between Landlords and the demolition programs the city has been slowly improving. I rehabilitated every home I own there and they are nice homes at this point. For the past several years I have held back from investing further in Gary because of what I see as a looter government that is unable to see that raising taxes without limit will strangle the City to death. I was finally feeling better when these tax caps were passed and even considering buying more homes to rehab.

I was sickened to see the City officials try and avoid what by every sane account are reasonable limits to taxation. When they bankrupt all the landlords where will they go for money? I don't have any more to give them and have been borrowing just to keep paying them. I can't keep doing it and even if I could why would I? If the State refuses to stick to the limits that have been passed and puts it off until 2012 why would I or anyone else think it will end there?

I implore you to put an end to this insanity. Make them solve their problems without robbing their tax base.

Sincerely,  
David Schroeder  
Member, Rhino Acquisitions LLC

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** andrea basarich [abasarich@sbcglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 24, 2008 12:26 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Fw: Counting the Workers Who Don't Work for Gary?

--- On Wed, 12/24/08, nglenn <nglenn@netnitco.net> wrote:  
From: nglenn <nglenn@netnitco.net>  
Subject: Fw: Counting the Workers Who Don't Work for Gary?  
To: Undisclosed-Recipient@yahoo.com  
Date: Wednesday, December 24, 2008, 10:14 AM

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Jack Lund  
**To:** nglenn  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 24, 2008 3:13 AM  
**Subject:** Counting the Workers Who Don't Work for Gary?

I agree with Kathy, but would go farther, and suggest that even those who actually show up for 'work', but then don't work, also be counted with the ghost 'workers'. And I'm thinking especially of parks workers, streets and sanitation workers, and front desk fingernail filers - folks who clearly do little or nothing, but get a paycheck 26 periods a year!

Those could have been cut immediately, so that firemen and cops wouldn't have had to have been cut. They were cut in a show of force, since they refused to do without a clothing allowance, as the mayor wanted.

He should have cut those ghosts and non-workers, instead, don't you agree? Once we add up those, department by department, and add up what they drain from the budget every payday, we might discover that there's enough remaining to pay for what's necessary - public safety, for example.

At 08:04 PM 12/23/2008, you wrote:

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Kathy Long  
**To:** nglenn  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 21, 2008 7:35 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Fw: Bite the bullet now...

Hey Beach,

we need to count all the city employees that collect a paycheck and NEVER show up at an office or report to work --- Gary has plenty of those check-cashers....

--- On Sun, 12/21/08, nglenn <nglenn@netnitco.net> wrote:

From: nglenn <[nglenn@netnitco.net](mailto:nglenn@netnitco.net)>  
Subject: Fw: Bite the bullet now...  
To: [Undisclosed-Recipient@yahoo.com](mailto:Undisclosed-Recipient@yahoo.com)  
Date: Sunday, December 21, 2008, 5:54 PM

----- Original Message -----

From: [Beach46403@aol.com](mailto:Beach46403@aol.com)  
To: [nglenn@netnitco.net](mailto:nglenn@netnitco.net)  
Sent: Saturday, December 20, 2008 4:48 PM  
Subject: Bite the bullet now...

**...or take one to the head later!**

If anyone has been keeping score, they should have made the observation over the past several years, that as the cost of local government has escalated, the level of services--along with the standard of living--has dropped significantly. So therefore, how can it be defended that we should give the local governments more money?

They really haven't shown us even one thing that they need this money for--this property tax surcharge--that will provide us any direct benefit. They threaten us by saying that without it they will have to cut public safety--that this will be the first order of business. Well, that's no surprise as neither the police or fire departments have really been considered parts of the patronage army, at least not the rank and file. Surely some in their administrations have been compliant pawns, but overall, these departments have not represented the blindly loyal and obedient troops that the rest of the city payroll traditionally has.

So for the moment, consider the threat of making significant staffing reductions in public safety, off the table. If in no other capacity, the State WILL have to become involved to ensure that the citizens of Gary do receive an adequate level of public safety. But Clay's willingness to freely and regularly make this threat demonstrates how desperate he and his palace guard are. Where else in the country could a mayor, someone ostensibly elected to protect the citizens, threaten to take such an action, an action which would without question put these same citizens in immediate danger? Essentially what he said was, the first cuts he will make are to public safety, long before he even explores the possibility of trimming any fat from the insatiable diet of his enormous, yet immobile, patronage army.

But as we study this inverse correlation between the cost of services and the actual level of services that are delivered, we can immediately recognize that as costs have risen, services have dropped dramatically. Why then don't we simply hypothesize that as costs are slashed, services will improve? At a minimum, we should be able to conclude that they will not get any worse. That they can't get any worse. And that they can't get much costlier. Please note that services have sunk to an all-time low over the past several years. It is through these same years that the budget had climbed to the highest on record. In years past, even though the budget was at nowhere near the level it has more recently grown to, the City had always been able to provide the necessary and expected services--at least to some minimum standards. Now, they don't even try. They've thrown in the towel. Giving them more money is not the answer.



## Body Count

Where is everybody? And what are they all doing? Besides Public Safety, there are over 800 other employees. (And I would be remiss if I didn't also remind everyone that there are many more people "employed" by the city through personal service contracts. This is where you'll typically find the most fat. And then there are even more whose employ are funded by grants) I can't figure out where they all could be hiding, much less figure out what they are doing. The vast majority of them are tucked away in offices scattered across the city. But let me remind everyone, you can't operate a city solely from an office. The majority of the work of running a city is field work. Maintaining streets, sidewalks, parks, pools, streetlights, street signs, etc. And snowplowing, salting, fixing potholes, etc.

Forget economic development. Forget redevelopment. Forget going to China. Forget cozying up to a long line of developers with big plans and small bank account balances. These are all luxuries--luxuries we cannot afford--at least not if we have to sacrifice public safety and other basic services to pay for them. What is so hard to understand that if we provide good basic services at an efficient cost, that all of the rest will naturally follow? And why do they think that if they devote all of their resources to all of this other stupidity, that they will be able to overcome all of the negative aspects of the city that emerge and expand while they neglect their basic duties and shirk all of their other responsibilities?

But really, where is everybody? There isn't anyone at the new General Services building at 9th and Madison. There isn't anybody at the old place on 9th Place and Madison. There isn't more than one person at 11th and Madison. There isn't anybody at 11th and Pierce. There isn't anybody at the old Reichman Trucking building on Chicago Ave. that the city occupied for a while. There may be a few people at the garage at 13th and Massachusetts. There isn't much to do at the parks in the winter. What do Parks department employees do all winter? GSD is supposed to be run by a private contractor, so we shouldn't have many city workers over there. Allied Waste is picking up the trash, so we don't need garbagemen anymore. They just demolished the Gary Neighborhood Services building on 19th and Madison, so they can't be hiding there. There are probably a few workers at Truck City of Gary's old building on Chicago Ave.

But alas no, the majority of the 800-plus non-public safety employees are not where they should be, not where one would expect to find them. The bulk of these workers can be found not in the field where they are needed--where they could do some good, but are holed up in offices and cubicles, wearing leisure suits and loafers, and designer dresses and high heels. Cities even Gary's size, only need a handful of administrative personnel. The maintenance and services that they are required to--obligated to--provide can only be performed by people that are appropriately skilled, properly equipped, and willing to perform said work.

So if you want to start making some progress on this head count, first go to City Hall at 401 Broadway. Next go to the Annex Building at 839 Broadway. Then go to the Public Safety facility at 555 Polk and go to the Clerk's office. As you visit these places, you will probably notice that there are no trucks, no street sweepers, no shovels, no brooms, no equipment of any kind whatsoever that is usually associated with maintaining the services which cities are responsible to provide.

But if you have the time to stop and observe any of the comfortable denizens of these office complexes, you'll be certain to find hundreds of people that wouldn't be caught dead in coveralls and work boots. I'd be surprised if they still remembered how to tie the laces on a shoe!

So while Rudy Clay fearmongers that without relief from the Distressed Unit Appeals Board that public safety will collapse, and attempts to use other scare tactics to influence citizens and taxpayers to support the City in its pathetic appeal. Don't buy it! The result will be exactly the opposite.

To begin with, there won't be any money for his horsesh#. There will only be money to perform the necessities. And it will be necessary for them to be performed efficiently. Quite simply, it will become a lot harder for them to steal. Next to impossible. Of course he and his minions are in a panic. The party is nearly over...for them. Ours can finally start. Not so much a party as just the ability to breath...to just live. That in itself would be a major improvement.

So, as you consider whether or not to support Rudy and his cronies as they shamelessly beg the State for the approval to mispend MORE of our tax dollars--as they ask for permission to overtax us even more; or if you consider not responding at all; or if you hopefully, vehemently object and are willing to take the time--to make the time--to write to the State, or appear in person at the hearing, just know what is riding on the verdict. This is for all the marbles! The city cannot survive the next four years if they are permitted to surcharge our taxes--to raise them back up. It was the State that saw fit to provide us with this legislation to reduce them. Make sure the relief we were promised doesn't get detoured. We need it now! The city cannot afford to wait. It can't afford the slightest delay.

If you think the city has already bottomed out, I've got news for you..."You ain't seen nothin' yet!" Imagine a mass exodus of the few remaining businesses. Imagine commercial residential properties becoming first vacant as the landlords are forced to raise rents, then imagine the abandonment of many of these properties that will soon follow. Imagine that the few jobs provided by the ever-decreasing number of private sector businesses located in Gary dry up as they finally fold up shop. Imagine that as this unemployment increases due to the collapse of the small business community, that street crime and other illicit activities will increase. The largest employer in Gary is not US Steel. It is not even local government (although this may be difficult to believe). It is small business. The City's request for the ability to surcharge taxpayers that they will be presenting to the State's Distressed Unit Appeals Board (DUAB) on January 5, 2009, if approved, will be the kill shot to the temple of small business, industry, and the commercial residential business communities. We may have a lot of residents that will be happy--if as Clay states they will be excluded from the effects of his request, but unfortunately, they will be residents of an economic wasteland, the likes of which no one has yet come close to experiencing in Gary.

Clay portends that if the DUAB does not grant him and the City relief, that there will be devastation. I contend that there will be far greater devastation if they do!

### **Just imagine**

What if we had a low enough tax rate that it would ATTRACT--rather than repel--businesses to the city?

And that it would encourage private investment to pour in instead of chasing it away? Just imagine if we had a tax rate that would ENCOURAGE people to fix up their houses and properties rather than discouraging them from doing so for fear that their assessed values would be increased and then multiplied by our incredibly high tax rate. Just imagine a THRIVING small business community rather than a dying one. Just imagine landlords and investors flocking to the city rather than running away from it.

You won't have to imagine long! The tax relief that will allow this to happen is just around the corner--as long as we don't let this administration get in its way...to stand in its way.

We are the largest city in the county. We are the most populated city in the county. We are the best situated city in the county. We have by far the largest lakefront in the county. We have the best highway access in the county.

I can't imagine that the city will not rise again if the State forces us--enables us--to rein in our tax rate. And to stop the uncontrolled spending and flagrant fiscal abuses in the process. It's a sure bet! You just need to make sure you are backing the right horse! Bet on you. Bet on us. Bet on all of us working together--to win!

And please...write to the State's Distressed Unit Appeals Board and let them know what you think. Send emails in care of [srusso@sba.in.gov](mailto:srusso@sba.in.gov) . You owe it to yourselves, you owe it to your children, and you owe it to your neighbors. It is really the least you can do.

**When they lose, we all win!**

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## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** Katie kostantios [bkostantios@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 24, 2008 10:28 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Gary's request for distressed unit

Dear Ms. Russo,

As a lifetime citizen of Gary, IN, I am requesting that the Indiana Distressed Unit Appeals Board deny the City of Gary's request. Gary, under "Mayor" Rudy Clay has continually worked against the state in trying to trim the fat from its city budget and has even suggested that they would get this bail out from the State. Rudy has cut back on jobs that are for the health and safety of its citizens but done little else. Please deny this request and make Rudy, finally, be held accountable for his actions.

I would also hope that actions be taken in the legislature and state government to afford the citizens of Indiana-- ESPECIALLY-Lake County and Gary, IN the necessary means and laws to recall the politicians that keep robbing us.

Sincerely,  
Katie Kostantios

**Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** Yolanda [ystoffregen@sbcglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 21, 2008 10:45 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** FW: Bite the bullet now...

I'm forwarding this from a fellow Gary citizen. **Please take the time to read this.** It expresses the thoughts and frustrations of many Gary residents. I oppose allowing an exemption to our current property tax rate. I oppose Mayor Clay's request for additional monies that, I believe, will continue to be wasted on endeavors that **will not** benefit the general population.

Yolanda Stoffregen

### **...or take one to the head later!**

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## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** ELIZABETH TEGARDEN [gtegarden@sbcglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 19, 2008 11:23 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Gary Tax Rate

Dear Members of the Distressed Unit Appeals Board:

Gary's tax cap for Homeowners should be lowered to 1% to be consistent with the majority of the State and no consideration should be given to Mayor Clay's attempt to raise the tax cap. Spending by Gary's mayor and city council cannot be justified in light of population loss and the loss in housing stock and, frankly, the basic needs of our communities. I sit here early Wednesday morning looking out of a street that has not been plowed and has not been plowed in over two years. I do not ask for much for my tax dollars, but I think drivable streets, garbage pick up and snow plowing would be a good start. This administration is so ripe with incompetence and dishonesty that little of anything is done to benefit the citizens while thousands of tax dollars are passed out to benefit the mayor's friends and the council member's buddies. Yes, Gary needs help but raising the tax rate on those of us who have paid so much for so very little is unfair, unjust and will do nothing but further feed a beast that needs serious reform not more money.

I have lived in Gary for 27 years and have paid taxes as high or higher than friends in neighboring communities owing bigger and better homes. This is wrong. As I've paid more and more, services have dwindled and dwindled now to just a trickle. Our city government has forgotten that we pay taxes for services - for road repair, snow removal, fire and police protection.

What we need here is the Local Option Income Tax. We need to put politics aside and the state should mandate our county to pass this tax. It is only fair and only just that the whole of the county help pay and be financially responsible for the poor and unemployed people on our cities. Nothing will improve as long as the number of citizens who are tax consumers and not tax payers increase. Nothing will improve when you demand that the tax paying base in Gary take up the financial responsibility for the economic, social and management mess that is the city of Gary. We pay and pay and pay for no tangible benefit.

It is now 5:30 am. The snow fall ended about 10 hours ago and although I live on one of the major streets in the Miller section of Gary, the street has not been plowed. And it will not be plowed. So I will bundle up and get out the snow blower and clean my drive and walk and the portion of the street in front of my house so that I can get access to the street. My neighbor will do the same. Between all of us, the street will become somewhat passible and we will all go to work because we have taxes to pay.

Please, before you buy Mayor Clay's pleas, talk to the people who work everyday and pay their taxes. You have a responsibility here. Yes, Gary need help but raising the tax cap is not the answer. Raising the tax cap will only serve to feed an incompetent, dishonest administration and force more working people to give up and move to Munster, or Hobart or Highland or Crown Point because in these communities you get something for your tax dollar. Thousands of honest hard working people who have decided to stay in Gary and make a life respectfully request that you deny Mayor Clay's attempt to raise the tax cap.



Sincerely,

Elizabeth G. Tegarden

Attorney at Law

8227 Locust Avenue

Gary, IN 46403

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** john rhyne [rhyne-j@sbcglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 11:48 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie; Russo, Stephanie

### To whom it may concern:

I'm writing this letter to say that I've read all the letters that I could find about the petition Gary sent to you to get more tax money. More tax money just means more money wasted.

Before Gary should get a dime, they need to clean out the closet. They need to have educated, responsible people run departments. When you call one department they transfer you to someone else and that person will transfer you back to the first person if your lucky, most of the time you get 3 or 4 other people before you get told that they don't know what I'm talking about.

Gary bought a Grad-all to dig out ditches. they say they don't have one now. Where did that money go? Gary had a Hubber-Craft, now they don't. Where did it go?

I just went to a meeting at the airport. The city just got into a contract to fill the J-Pit ( water filled sandmine ) with construction debris. When the citizens asked "where is the money going that the city makes, the department heads and city attorney just looked at each other dumbfounded, "they want to know where the monies are going" would'nt you think a city in detress would know where the money is going and that should be job one.

When the Calumet River floods and starts running over the roads, it takes days for Gary to come out and put up road blocks. Then after the water goes down, they don't come out and pick them up. People start running over them, breaking them up so they can't be reused. That's just a start to how things are done around here. If they would pick-up one road block, that would save at least \$100.

I just don't beleive that we as citizens of Gary have to fight to stop Gary getting any more monies. Especially, after the governor said how corrupt Gary is. He said we have to vote corruption out, but how can you when so many people are all in it together. I think you need to put the State Police in Gary to start policing Gary City Officials.

It does'nt stop at the Mayor's deck either, Gary City Counsel has the power to stop all this mismanagement.

John Rhyne  
2423 Edison st.  
Gary, IN  
46406

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** carole barnes [cbarnes805@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 12:07 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** DUBA-GARY

Dear Ms. Russo and Board Members,

Please DO NOT allow Gary to receive ANY additional funding. As residents of Gary we are not able to receive/view any detailed financial reports from this administration. Mayor Clay, through the Gary Sanitary District, has privatized our trash pickup with a no bid contract at a much higher rate than surrounding communities while retaining the city sanitation workers on the 2009 budget (and what happened to our existing garbage trucks?) AND in April increased our billing rate from GSD by 87%. We have no reports to show how either of these transactions was computed. We know that documents were collected by the FBI and await the findings on their studies.

Mayor Clay refuses to cut city employees, although we have at least double the number employed by other cities, and his constant threat is to cut our already understaffed emergency staff of Police and Fire Fighters in this crime ridden city. Whether this is retaliation, or scare tactics, no one should think of cutting these critical departments.

There are so many abuses here it is difficult to select only a few. Please do not let the fear of racism enter into your deliberations. The meeting that was held to present the Mayors appeal to the state was met with opposition by a wide variety of citizens. His disdain for our opinions was complete with his statement that "God is good", when asked if he would forego his \$31,000 salary from GSD for which he has admitted that he does nothing.

This city MUST change and that will only happen when there is nothing left to steal, which time is fast approaching.

Sincerely,  
Carole Barnes  
739 N Montgomery St

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** Chris Clay [chrissclay@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 12:19 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Help for Gary

Our mayor will be presenting his case for help to the Distressed Unit Board on January 5. I will be unable to attend this hearing but wanted to express my sincere desire that you listen to the facts objectively. I attended the public hearing on Gary's financial crisis. Upon taking office, this mayor has faced budget shortages, financial errors and mismanagement of funds from the previous administration. He has jumped through hoop after hoop to keep our city operating. His dedication and commitment to this city resulted in his taking a pay cut along with other staff and employees. Please help us! Keep the politics out. There are those who are putting together their candidate for mayor and will do anything to cause this mayor and our city to fail.

Thanks!

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** rodney geer [rgeer@att.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 12:55 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Bailout for Gary Indiana

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this to you as a concerned citizen of Northwest Indiana. I am disgusted by the poor choices that have been made by the current Gary administration and feel that they, not the change in taxing structure are responsible for Gary's poor economic state. I feel that a state bailout would only be a short term fix to a long term problem.

Unfortunately, I believe the state must step in and assist the city of Gary if only to protect citizens of other communities. If Gary cuts police, fire, and social services, the worst elements of that city will invade neighboring communities and disproportionately burden those communities resources. If economic assistance is given to the city of Gary I strongly suggest that it come with conditions. It is imperative to cut the wasteful spending of take-home cars for non-public safety employees. Additionally, there seems to be a large amount of salary paid to the mayor and his family that should be examined. Also, the mayor collects a separate salary from the sanitary district. It is plainly apparent that the city of Gary administration has not done all that it needs to do in order to secure the financial viability of its town.

The tax cap is not the problem that Gary is facing; the problem is a destructive administration. If a bailout is offered this year the city will be back begging for assistance in only a few short years. Please, protect the citizens of the state of Indiana and do not offer assistance to Gary without substantial restrictions and conditions.

Respectfully,  
Rodney Geer  
1631 Aspen Drive  
Crown Point, IN 46307

**Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** cbrilmyer@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 1:30 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Oppose the request of the City of Gary for relief from the property tax caps

I opose the request of the City of Gary for relief from the property tax caps legislated by the Indiana General Assembly in HB1001 of 2008. I hope that the panel looks into the way Gary spends its budget. I beilieve that there is still a great deal of fluff. One example, council members have given over \$15,000 dollars to the Gary Theater Guild when streets are in need of repair. Then there's the mayor's son. He is being paid to take pictures, while the mayor is talking about laying off firefighters and police.

I do not think the mayor should be threatening to cut firefighters and the police to frighten citizens into supporting his proposals. Please look carefully at his proposals. Someone needs to help the citizens of Gary from the greed and mismanagemnt that has plagued our city.

Catherine W. Brilmyer  
1101 N. Vanderburg St.  
Gary, IN 46403

## **Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** Ted Prettyman [mcctedp@sbcglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 2:35 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** City of Gary's appeal

TO: Ms. S. Russo  
Members of the of the Distressed Unit Appeal Board

Please scrutinize City of Gary's budgets carefully and understand why it is so very important that you decide to deny its appeal.

With the long history of, at best, questionable forthright and competent governing of the City of Gary it is clear that more money will provide no long-term (or short-term) solution the the myriad of problems inflicted upon the citizens of the City of Gary, Indiana. Instead, wise and intelligent stewardship of current revenues needs to be exercised so as to regain some credibility and the respect of the public and other governmental agencies that may possess the capacity to assist the city in digging out of its quagmire.

The Federal Government granted the city, back in the 70's, some \$125,000,000.00 to upgrade and improve its sanitary facilities. Reports state that not a single penny was spent on the intended project, instead the money morphed into other financial "entities found only in obscurity." Similiar incidences have since occured, most specifically the recent scandal regarding Gary Urban Economic Enterprizes and the millions of dollars squandered not to mention the hundreds of parcels remaining vacant - and off the tax rolls - after some twenty years.

The City of Gary and its associated agencies must be forced to live within their means, short as they may be presently. Any more money will be simply frittered away on the "usual" causes to insure re-election, etc., if history is to be believed. The various governing boards lack sufficient expertise to adequately perform needed tasks normally assigned to such bodies, as is evidenced by their individual histories.

Until we, the taxpaying citizens, rebelled and convinced the legislature to limit the tax rates with caps, we were assessed a tax rate of nearly 10% as a result of the 2000 reassessment. More recent actions of the governor and legislature have somewhat secured those caps except for the vehicles providing opportunities for circumventing them.

Some of us plan to attend the city's appeal on January 5. We look forward to meeting you and presenting our objections to your board.

Ted Prettyman  
Gary, Indiana

Resident since 1963



## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** Kimberly A. Cloud [kcloud@ivytech.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 2:50 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** RE: Gary's Bail out

This was my opinion and not that of my workplace. If that could be conveyed I would appreciate it.

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**From:** Russo, Stephanie [mailto:srusso@sba.in.gov]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 1:45 PM  
**To:** Kimberly A. Cloud  
**Subject:** RE: Gary's Bail out

Thank you, Ms. Cloud. I am in receipt of your email and will be sure the DUAB receives.

Sincerely,

**Stephanie N. Russo**  
Executive Assistant to Ryan Kitchell and Chris Ruhl  
Indiana Office of Management and Budget  
State House Room 215 | Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Phone: 317.232.5617 | Fax: 317.233.3323 |  
Email: [srusso@sba.in.gov](mailto:srusso@sba.in.gov)

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**From:** Kimberly A. Cloud [mailto:kcloud@ivytech.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 2:44 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Gary's Bail out

I find it very unequal that we as citizen's when we get in over our heads financially are required to "tighten our belts". When the government is in over their heads, they want to raise taxes. Let them tighten their belts and not by laying off the fire and police department employees. I find that tactic blackmail. There are other ways to budget, one of them would have been not to have your son take pictures at \$25,000.00. Why should the already burden people of Gary and NWI be made to bail out Gary? Run the city like a profitable business and maybe Gary just might grow into what it could be.

Kimberly Cloud  
Regional Accounts Receivable Supervisor  
Ivy Tech Community College  
1440 East 35th Ave  
Gary, Indiana 46409  
219-981-4453  
219-981-4405-fax

**Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** Patricia Wagner [pwagner@ci.gary.in.us]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 2:54 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie

City of Gary application to Distress Unit Appeal Board

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December 29, 2008

To the Distress Unit Appeal Board,

I am appealing to you not only as the Executive Manager of the City of Gary owned Genesis Convention Center, but, also, as a citizen who has resided in Gary for twenty years.

The challenges which Gary has faced over the years, tho devastating, have been met and to date we , as a city, have survived. These have included businesses leaving the city, reduction in the work force in the steel industry, abandoned properties, decrease in population numbers and rise in crime. Perhaps the one issue that most negatively affected Gary is the drastic and unjust reduction of taxes to be paid by U.S.Steel. This coupled with reassessments that left home and small business owners unable to pay forcing further foreclosures, abandonments, and business closings compounded an already challenging economic situation.

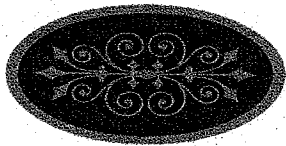
The passage of HB1011, however, is a blow too big for the city to handle all at one time. I believe that the gradual reductions in operational costs and the shift of some costs to other entities inclusive of privatization as outlined in specific detail by Mayor Clay, Controller Celita Green and others who aided in the formulation of the plan submitted to the Distress Unit Appeal Board, address what we, the city of Gary, are able to do immediately and can phase into the future. I believe the plan to be well thought out, fact based, and sound.

The city employees under my supervision accepted a 20% pay cut (4 day week) as they all knew it must be done. They have accepted that there have been and will be no pay increases for the immediate future , in spite of higher food , housing and utility costs. They support the city in its efforts to provide the best possible services within the constraints of an already reduced budget. They continue to provide the clients and customers of the Genesis Convention Center with a quality product and good service, and this in spite of increased work loads and decreased benefits. They are committed to the city in which they live and work.

I , as the Executive Manager of the Genesis Center, and perhaps more importantly as a homeowner and citizen of Gary ask all who serve on the Distress Unit Appeal Board, to review the appeal as presented by the City of Gary and take a serious look at the consequences if relief is not granted.

Sincerely,

Patricia T. Wagner, Executive Manager, Genesis Convention Center



12-23-08  
Miller, In.

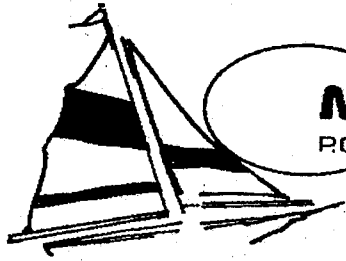
To  
Executive Assistant  
Stephanie N. Russo:

In regard to the City of Gary  
and several of its subsidiaries  
application to the "Distressed  
Unit Appeals Board" for the  
right to exceed the tax caps in  
2009.

Streamlining Gary government  
with of course the exception of  
safety, into efficient use of  
the allocated funds under  
the caps is a must.  
The caps must be kept  
in place.

Sincerely,  
John Karagony

P.S. A happy Holiday  
To you and yours.



**Miller Business Association**  
P.O. Box 2817 • Gary, IN 46403 • (219) 938-4566

12-19-08

Stephanie N. Russo  
Executive Assistant to Ryan Kitchell and Chris Ruhl  
Indiana Office of Management and Budget  
State House Room 215  
Indianapolis, In 46204

Stephanie,

Businesses in Gary Indiana have been paying up to 9 % of market value assessed valuations since the 2003 payable 2004 property taxes. As a result, the number of businesses in the Miller Business Association has dwindled greatly. Excessive, unsustainable taxes has taken there toll on our business community.

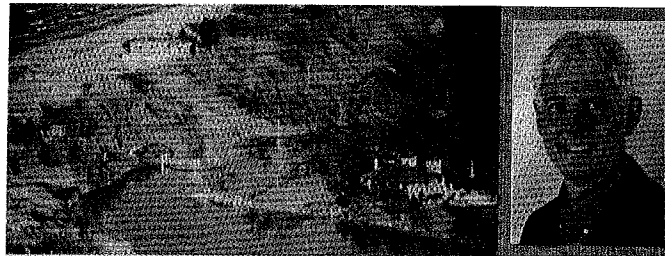
The City of Gary in a town hall meeting on 12-15-08 stated, businesses will suffer the brunt of over the tax cap increases under the city's proposal to the Distress Unit Appeals Board. Many of the businesses that are left are holding on only in anticipation of the 3% tax cap.

The City of Gary's over spending should not be a reason to tax the last surviving businesses out of Gary. Please deny the City of Gary's proposal.

George A. Rogge

President

Community Activist  
219-781-5953 Cell  
email: tax@georgerogge.com



Insurance  
219-738-2838  
www.roggeinsurance.com

*It's Time For The Best . . . George A. Rogge*

1135 North Union Street • Gary, Indiana 46403

12-22-08

Stephanie N. Russo  
Executive Assistant to Ryan Kitchell and Chris Ruhl  
Indiana Office of Management and Budget  
State House Room 215  
Indianapolis, In. 46204

Stephanie,

I write this letter with the past unique experiences of being the originator of the 2 % property tax cap and serving as Gary Park Department Board President under three Gary mayors. Understanding the culture of the City of Gary since the late 60s will explain the unusual paradox the city finds itself in.

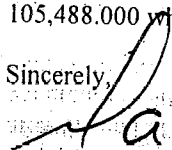
As an example, I came up with the term of "temporary permanent" after years of many of the summer park help pleading to the superintendent and the Mayor to keep them employed somewhere in the city system after the end of the summer. The same situation would occur when a position that was started and paid for via grant would end. The ramification over the years put many grass cutters in city office positions of no value other than they are permanently employed.

The above may be an example of how the City of Gary becomes bloated, but what is far worse is the benefits that add up to unbelievable levels. Please see the attached Post- Tribune article. Not only that the position does not exist in the same size City of Hammond but the position comes with the regular health benefits, a city cell phone, city credit card, city car with ( gas, insurance, maintenance) and laptop. This is not an isolated example of excessive spending, this is a normal example.

The 2% cap was originally drafted to prevent the City of Gary of being able to go around the cap. Later legislation allows the Gary City Schools to add \$ 1.19 per \$ 100 of assessed valuation above the 2007 payable 2008 homeowner 2% cap. Let's not forget the debt obligations estimated at \$ .75 per \$ 100 of assessed valuation will be over the new caps of 2009 through 2020.

Solution: The City of Gary must spend like a normal municipality. Allow our elected assessor to assess U.S. Steel, which has seven miles of lakefront, fairly. Today, U.S. Steel's real estate is assessed at \$ 105,488,000 which is lower than South Lake Mall in the City of Hobart.

Sincerely,

  
George A. Rogge

## REGION

# Gary council chief of staff ousted

By JON SEIDEL

Post-Tribune staff writer

GARY — Security escorted the City Council's chief of staff from City Hall on Tuesday after council President Ronier Scott abruptly placed the employee on paid leave for the rest of the year.

The job held by Rachele Morgan-Ceaser is among several that were cut from Gary's 2009 budget as city officials prepared to grapple with a multi-million dollar shortfall.

Scott cited those economic conditions in a letter notifying Morgan-Ceaser of his decision, but he didn't explain how a paid leave would benefit the city

financially.

When asked to explain his decision, as well as the urgency with which the employee was removed from City Hall, Scott refused to comment.

Now some of Scott's fellow council members are questioning his apparently unilateral decision, and at least one is publicly accusing the council president of retribution against an employee.

"It speaks to the unethical culture of our current administration and certain council members," Ragen Hatcher, D-at large, said.

The council's chief of staff was budgeted to receive \$50,359 this year, city records

show. In his letter, Scott also asked Morgan-Ceaser to turn over a city cell phone, credit card, car and laptop.

Morgan-Ceaser, who said she felt embarrassed and threatened after Scott approached her with security personnel, said she is speaking to an attorney about the situation.

"He was clearly very angry," Morgan-Ceaser said of Scott.

The day's events did not come up during Tuesday night's council meeting. Council member Kyle Allen, D-at large and chairman of the personnel committee, said before the meeting that any change in the status of Morgan-Ceaser's employment requires a council vote.

"There is a procedure to follow if the City Council wishes to remove the chief of staff," Allen said, "and that procedure is based on legal precedent."

Hatcher, meanwhile, pointed to a recent Post-Tribune investigation of City Council spending. It found Scott donated \$104,000 to a Merrillville-based non-profit housing agency whose attorney is now facing federal embezzlement charges.

Days later, another local newspaper published an unattributed column suggesting a council staff member triggered that investigation when they learned their job would soon be cut from the budget.

In fact, the investigation

## **Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** Cohen, Ronald [rcohen@iun.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 29, 2008 3:38 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** State bailout for Gary, IN

I am in STRONG support of Gary Mayor Rudy Clay's petition for a state bailout in 2009. Gary has been crippled by the property tax caps, and now I find that it is almost impossible to drive on the city's road, particularly in the Miller neighborhood, where I live, because of the large potholes and the city's inability to fill them. I have been a homeowner in Gary since 1974 and am very concerned about the city's current financial problems. I believe the Mayor has made a strong case for state financial support.

Cordially,  
Ronald D. Cohen  
8641 Pine Ave.  
Gary, IN 46403

**Robert J Schleyer**  
**7436 Oak Avenue**  
**Gary, IN 46403**

December 29, 2008

Indiana Distressed Unit Appeals Board  
Indiana Office of Management and Budget  
200 W. Washington St., #212  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Reference: City of Gary

Honorable Board Members:

We strongly oppose the granting of any exception to the City of Gary.

We have resided in Gary almost 20 years and while Mayor Rudy Clay has only been the mayor for a while, he has inherited an economic and social problem. The imposing of property tax caps recognized that cities like Gary were not readily reducing their size or expenditures appropriately to the reduction of business and residents within the cities.

The City of Gary has relied on tax revenue from US steel, anticipated revenues from gambling, and their continued ability to be a works program for patronage workers. The tax revenue stream has changed forever and the city must also change the way they serve the people, and not focus on their patronage workers.

We have closely watched the City of Gary's reaction to having their tax revenue capped, and have found the continued sense of entitlement and focus on preserving city jobs; and not recognizing the reality that the city is in now and will be in the future. Having consulted at governmental agencies, it is clear to me that there is need for a radical reorganization and restructuring of the City of Gary's operations. This significant structural reorganization will not occur unless the continued pressure of tax revenue shortfalls is allowed to continue.



Having read Mayor Clay's comments about citizens being opposed to the continued mismanagement of the city's resources, I can only comment that the comments appear to be red herrings to confuse the issue for the appeals board. The mayor has issued his idle threat that he expects to leverage money from the board by indicating a layoff police and fire for fighters with more viewing often 2010. He does indicate that he will need to eliminate hundreds of civilian jobs in the next two years without relief. Why there is a current need for hundreds of civilian jobs, which are capable of being cut that haven't been looked at yet?

Most telling is his refusal to contact Sen. Bayh and make available for the city the infrastructure revenues that will be made available in 2009.

Mayor Clay along with other political cronies of Northwest Indiana had had their hands in the pocketbooks of the citizens and industry for too long. Now is the time to draw the line and change the way government is run in Northwest Indiana.

Ask yourselves, if not now then when?

Please do not grant the City of Gary any exceptions

Sincerely

*Robert J. Schleyer*

Robert J. Schleyer

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** marcella cook [babyrojona@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 30, 2008 10:18 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** comment!!!!!!!!!!

I don't know how people can say we don't need money in Gary. Gary needs all the money they can get. Gary is suffering and broke. Gary need the tax money. Them 30 letters the Unit shouldn't even count because more than 30 letters is nothing and small. There are many residents in Gary and more 30 letters is not saying anything. Anybody who is opposed to a state bailout is either crazy or have money or just want to see the city struggle and not get the money. Personally I don't think the people who wrote these letters didn't do their research and don't know what they talking about. I really hope Gary get the money it is much needed. The city already look like a dump. There is so much that needs to be done to Gary. WE NEED THE MONEY!!!!

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** The Orners [pworner@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 30, 2008 11:18 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Opposition to petition to exceed tax caps/Gary, IN

**Importance:** High

Dear Mr. Russo:

I am not an activist, and have never before been moved to participate in favor of or opposition to a proposed action in the public arena, until now.

I have followed the property tax controversy in Lake County fairly closely over the years, and also have strong opinions about the problems and SOME obvious solutions to the fiscal problems in Gary and Lake County. I firmly believe that party interest, self-interest and incompetence (not necessarily in that order) are the biggest problems facing these entities. (Corruption is a likely if not a necessary by-product of those problems.)

As such, I am writing to express my resolute opposition to the City of Gary's appeal to exceed the property tax caps in 2009. I believe the only way to finally break the stranglehold on the taxpayers is to allow a (further) crisis to occur. I have lived in Gary all of my 49 years, and as a younger man believed that the suffocating problems the City has long faced would eventually be overcome by its natural economic advantages (primarily its geographic location and extant infrastructure) and newer generations of more public-spirited and capable people. Unfortunately, I now believe that can only happen after things get much worse than they already are. I further believe that the intention of the legislature was to force necessary reform in just such a manner, and that the response of Mayor Clay proves beyond any doubt that he has no intention of ANY meaningful reform. To grant an appeal will only delay the inevitable, and further soak property owners while the monies raised are wasted and the property being taxed is further devalued.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Paul W. Orner  
1001 N. Wayne St.  
Gary, IN 46403

**Russo, Stephanie**

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**From:** Sandicogan@aol.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 30, 2008 11:49 AM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Appeal for the City of Gary

*Distressed Unit Appeal Board  
re: City of Gary*

*Among the many challenges facing our elected officials and decision makers in the near future, is the lack of money needed to operate our cities and towns. The loss of vital city services will prove quite detrimental to the quality of life for the citizens of Gary. (Loss of police and fire protection among other city services) It is imperative that a favorable resolution to this crisis is granted to the citizens of Gary.*

*Sincerely,*

*Sandi Cogan*

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One site keeps you connected to all your email: AOL Mail, Gmail, and Yahoo Mail. [Try it now.](#)

## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** aboobokar@aol.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 30, 2008 12:38 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Cc:** jseidel@post-trib.com  
**Subject:** Gary

Dear Office of Mangement and Budget

I write in opposition to the City of Gary's request for additional money. The City of Gary has over 1,600 full time employees, an additional 200 part time employees, and at least another 100 individuals hired as consultants or working under professional service contracts. Lake Station, in contrast, has under 70 people on its payroll.

Gary, with an estimated population of 95,000, expends roughly \$6,168 per person annually. Lake Station, with an estimated population of 14,000, expends only \$1,071 per person annually, while Lake Station is an arguably cleaner, safer and more prosperous nearby community made up of similar people.

Differently put, Gary employs more than *t wenty two times* the number of city workers employed by Lake Station, *excluding* Gary's part time employees and consultants, (Gary's 1600 to Lake Station's 70 employees), even though *Gary is only seven times larger* than Lake Station. This means that compared to Lake Station, Gary has a three to one ratio of city employees on a per capita basis.

More spending on yet more Gary staff is *not* the answer and may in fact be part of the problem. Please do not let the property tax payers continue to be skewered by an excessively bloated city government.

Thank you,  
Mary Dugger

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## Russo, Stephanie

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**From:** Nancy Hoffa [nhoffa@sbcglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 30, 2008 2:33 PM  
**To:** Russo, Stephanie  
**Subject:** Gary's request

Dear Office of Mangement and Budget,

I write in opposition to the City of Gary's request for additional money. The City of Gary has over 1,600 full time employees, an additional 200 part time employees, and at least another 100 individuals hired as consultants or working under professional service contracts. Our mayor can only think of reducing police or fireman which is a scare tactic. Instead waste and cutting non-essential staff is the key. No bid contracts should be a thing of the past. A mayor with a Hummer and body guards should also be a thing of the past. Please do not let residential property taxpayers continue to be burdened by an excessively bloated city government. USX needs to go back to paying its fair share.

Thank you,  
Nancy Hoffa  
6130 Forest Avenue  
Gary, IN