



## THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

**SENATOR MIKE HARIDOPOLOS**

26th District

October 14, 2010

Linda South  
Secretary  
Florida Department of Management Services  
4050 Esplanade Way  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Secretary South,

As public servants we have an obligation to serve our fellow Floridians with wise stewardship of the tax dollars used to run state government. After reviewing the recent audit of the new First District Court of Appeal courthouse conducted by the state's chief financial officer, I have serious concerns that you have violated the trust placed upon you as secretary of the Department of Management Services.

The audit details a project with runaway spending for extravagant items that have no place in a government building. Even though the audit acknowledges the active involvement of First DCA judges, Florida law places sole responsibility for construction of this new courthouse on your agency.

Two findings in the audit are especially troubling to me: handing statutory control of the construction over to another entity; and "rent" from the building occupancy will not be enough to pay for the bonded debt service, requiring additional state resources to pay for this building.

**[Finding:** Pursuant to Section 255.503, Florida Statutes, the DMS is responsible for designing, financing, constructing, maintaining and leasing the new 1DCA courthouse. Despite the statutory directive, DMS allowed 1DCA to control the Project, ultimately resulting in increased project costs.]

**[Finding:** The new courthouse consists of 97,000 square feet of rentable office space. The annualized rent is \$1,666,460. The debt service on the building is running approximately \$2,500,000 per year. Because the annual lease payments for the new courthouse space will be insufficient to cover the debt service for the bonds that finance the construction of the courthouse, the other members of the pool will subsidize the debt service for these bonds. The courthouse will be the only facility in the pool with a debt service which is subsidized by pool lease payments.]

As the head of DMS, responsibility for these two findings falls on your shoulders.

REPLY TO:

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Because of your irresponsible oversight, which has clearly wasted millions of taxpayer dollars, I call on you to submit your immediate resignation as Secretary of the Department of Management Services. You have failed to provide proper leadership and the abdication of your responsibilities has further weakened the public's trust that their elected and appointed leaders will use their money wisely.

Furthermore, in the spirit of open government and transparency, I would encourage you to allow the media to tour this publicly-funded facility. As part of legislative oversight for all government spending, I recommend that you give serious consideration to this request.

Secretary, I await your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Haridopolos". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mike Haridopolos  
Senator, District 26