
From: Holton, Jennifer (MDARD)
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Ananich Suggests Auditor, Oversight Committees Get Involved On Flint

get="_blank">ANANICH (D-Flint) continued his calls to pry deeper into the Flint water crisis today, suggesting the legislative oversight committees take up an investigation and asking the state auditor general to dig in.

Ananich said he sent a letter to the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) today, which is already conducting an audit of the Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance within the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

The Senate Minority Leader said he submitted some additional questions to be considered in the audit, which is slated for release in early 2016, according to the OAG website.

Also, Ananich mentioned the House Oversight Committee and newly formed Senate Oversight Committee as "appropriate" places to conduct an investigation.

That's something the House Oversight Committee chair, Rep. Ed **MCBROOM** (R-Vulcan), said he's at least considering.

"I've actually been giving that some thought and doing some initial research to kind of see if whether there's a need for that," he said.

McBroom said he's been looking at timelines, the history of the situation and whether people took responsibility for what happened, but no decision has been made yet as to whether to conduct an investigation.

Likewise, Senate Majority Leader Arlan **MEEKHOF** (R-West Olive) is open to talking to Ananich about the situation and his suggestions, but no decisions on a course of action has been made, according to Meekhof spokesperson Amber **McCANN**.

The new Senate Oversight Committee is chaired by Sen. Peter **MACGREGOR** (R-Rockford), who didn't return a call today.

On Monday, the DEQ announced it had reassigned an official in charge of the drinking water division after a mistake was made in the oversight of Flint's water (See "DEQ Takes Blame On Flint Water, Ananich Unforgiving," 10/19/15).

But that didn't stop the Michigan Democratic Party Monday -- and Progress Michigan today -- from calling for DEQ Director Dan **WYANT** to vacate his position as well.

"You can't simply reshuffle some staff at the department to make up for poisoning thousands of Flint children. When families and kids are told their drinking water is safe and it's actually filled with toxins, someone needs to be held accountable. It starts at the top with Wyant," said Lonnie **SCOTT**, executive director of Progress

Michigan, in a statement. "He needs to resign immediately or Gov. (Rick) SNYDER needs to quickly show him the door."

Snyder told *The Detroit News* Monday, "Dan Wyant's done a great job in responding to all of that. So I appreciate all of Dan's hard work."

Ananich today said, "I think we need to have a thorough investigation before we make any decisions about who should be fired."

He also emphasized he wants to see an independent, thorough investigation into the entire matter, and if there's negligence found, he said he wants to see "very serious consequences."

"I think we have to get to the bottom of how folks in the Drinking Water Division could so blatantly do everything they can in their power to hide the truth from the public, and that's pretty clearly what they did," Ananich said.

Snyder's administration said yesterday it would be calling for an independent third-party review into the Flint matter, and that the DEQ will continue its internal review.

Sent from my iPhone