



STATEMENT OF BOB CROGHAN, CHAIRPERSON ORGANIZATION OF STAFF ANALYSTS

BEFORE THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMITTEE
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
JOSEPH ADDABBO, JR., CHAIR
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I am very proud of the work done by members of the Organization of Staff Analysts research department.

On June 9, 2001 nearly two thousand Staff Analysts took the exam for promotion to Associate Staff Analyst.

Each of my members was aware that if they failed to pass the exam that was testing them for merit and fitness, they could not be promoted to the permanent title of Associate Staff Analyst. Each had spent dozens of hours in classrooms preparing for the exam. Most had spent still more hours in home study of over a thousand pages of reference material.

June 9th was a warm day and some of the test sites were very uncomfortable.

Hundreds failed the exam that day and would be denied promotion for years to come. Nearly thirteen hundred candidates did pass the exam.

Over the next three years most agencies did promote those of their staff who had passed the exam. In a few agencies, however, every effort was made to avoid obeying either the spirit or the letter of the civil service law.

The folders provided to the City Council detail a pattern of abuse by certain City agencies. Commissioners appointed to positions of public trust are guilty of betraying that trust and for what reason?

The clearest example is the New York City Department of Transportation. Twenty-one candidates were denied appointment. The agency had no fiscal reason to deny promotion. There are as many and more Associates serving provisionally right now.

The agency had no factual basis to deny promotion either. As you will see in the folders provided, the very same employees denied promotion were often rated far above average by their superiors.

They were even assigned Associate Staff Analyst work in many cases, while they are still being denied permanent status. We are not talking about bad apples. We are listing the names and documenting the work histories of outstanding career employees denied fair treatment.

Pat Burns and Ronda Messer of the Department of Health and Mental Health won out of title grievances. The agency needs their work, is even paying them for their work as Associate Staff Analysts. Yet that agency still denies them the permanent status that both their work and their success on the exam merits.

Ms. Tehrani from Department of Transportation is a Corrosion Engineer and a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. I did not even know there was such a field of study. Many years ago when Ms. Tehrani was not yet working for the City, she noticed a problem. She called up the Department of Transportation and warned them that in her estimate, the East River bridges were about to fall down. They were. As soon as D.O.T. got the money to fix them, they called her up and offered her a job. She was recommended for promotion. Her agency has refused. Why?

I ask the members of the Council to read the stories. Some of these candidates will testify today.

Our request for remedy is very reasonable, even conservative.

We ask only that once a list is exhausted, those considered but not selected be restored for future consideration.

To do less, and to appoint persons never even tested for merit and fitness instead is an open breach of the public trust.

We ask your help to halt this abuse.