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# SUNY flim-flam

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**It looks like state Comptroller Tom DiNapoli is about to rip the State University's Research Foundation for misspending millions.**

Including that \$913,000 no-bid contract to former New York Chief Judge Judith Kaye's firm to conduct a legal analysis.

That's good news: This page first called on DiNapoli to investigate that dubious contract — which spared top SUNY brass from serious criticism in a scandal surrounding an equally dubious basketball program — back in March 2010.

As allegations swirled surrounding the program at SUNY-Binghamton, SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher personally selected Kaye and her law firm for the contract.



Nancy Zimpher

Paying for the Kaye contract was the foundation, which ostensibly funds organized research through its \$1 billion endowment.

At the time, Zimpher claimed this was to spare taxpayers the cost of the contract.

But the arrangement also allowed her to get around a state law requiring such contracts to be put to bid and approved by both the attorney general and the comptroller.

And that's hardly the only problem at the foundation, according to a draft copy of the audit obtained last week by an upstate newspaper.

Zimpher herself reportedly is criticized for spending \$28,000 in foundation funds on personal expenses — like private-club memberships and booze.

The foundation fired its general counsel after just 11 months and ended up paying her \$655,356 in salary, bonus and severance.

The foundation's research manager at one campus, who was fired last winter, used his official credit card for foreign travel, an iPad, luxury dining and season hockey tickets.

Moreover, according to the audit, the foundation spent \$3 million on at least 10 contracts that violated policy and/or had a potential conflict of interest.



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The foundation has hired a new president who's promised a "new day" by tightening contracting policies and issuing new ethical guidelines.

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Sounds like a thorough housecleaning is called for first.

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