

"Power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Executive Odell, you have structured an administration that is contemptuous of transparency, contemptuous of public participation, and contemptuous of accountability. The so-called secrecy law is not a clarification of state and federal law. It is an attempt to extend your already over-reaching control of legislative and staff communication. It is an attempt to hamstring communications of elected officials and employees, particularly when their opinions dissent from yours, and when they believe that the public needs to be made aware of issues and conduct within County government. I would go so far to say that it is an attempt to intimidate those who might question what they witness in your corrupt administration.

Most importantly, the proposed legislation is arbitrary and capricious, having no defined criteria for determining the classification of communications as "confidential," and no criteria for identifying those to whom the power will be extended. It broadly extends the power to any staff, elected officials and/or consultants. This is an absurd, sweeping provision of discretionary authority that will not withstand challenge. You're inviting a lawsuit against Putnam County, and once again you are wasting taxpayer money. Yours is not conduct becoming an upright County Executive.

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