

# *The President's Office of the Monroe County Legislature*



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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**CONTACT:** Bridget Harvey  
**PHONE:** (585) 753-1922

## **STATEMENT FROM MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE PRESIDENT JOE CARBONE**

*Re: Calls for independent investigations into Ernest Flagler-Mitchell  
As delivered at January 28, 2021 Press Conference*

“As I have stated before, I want to thank Ms. Sinclair for bringing these allegations to the Legislature's attention. I will not attempt to relate to what Ms. Sinclair has gone through because I simply cannot, and to try and do so would only trivialize her experience.

“As President of the Legislature, my job is to ensure Ms. Sinclair's concerns are taken seriously and thoroughly investigated and we have done just that. There are presently two ongoing investigations into this matter – a criminal investigation led by the District Attorney's Office and an ethical investigation led by the Board of Ethics.

“We need to let these independent entities do their job and conduct thorough and impartial investigations. Anything less is an affront of the seriousness of the allegations.

“Some have also called for an independent investigation led by the Legislature. I support an independent investigation, but not one that would interfere with either of the two ongoing investigations. Only once both ongoing investigations are concluded will we know whether a legislative-led independent investigation is warranted.

“Unfortunately, partisan-politics have already been interjected into this serious matter. I acted expeditiously to appoint a final member to the Board of Ethics while Democrats attempted to grand-stand on the matter. I was the only Legislator to direct the matter to be referred to the Board of Ethics despite all Legislators – both Republican and Democrat - receiving formal notification of the complaint at the same time. I want to seek out the truth through a proven, fair, and unbiased process, democrat legislators want to be judge, jury, and executioner.

“Serious matters like this require sensitivity. I ask that going forward my colleagues in the Legislature, regardless of party, recognize this and set politics aside out of respect for Ms. Sinclair and the importance of the issue at hand.

“We have a process in place that centers around two ongoing investigations – a criminal investigation led by the District Attorney's Office and an ethical investigation led by the Board of Ethics. We need to respect the integrity of both investigations and let this process play out.

“If, as a result of these investigations, it is determined that Legislator Flagler-Mitchell committed criminal wrongdoing, then yes, I think he should resign. At the end of the day, no one has the power to force a Legislator to resign; not the President and not any individual Legislator. Only the voters hold that power.

“I look forward to the completion of both investigations and maintain my position that neither the Legislature nor any Legislator should interfere with the ongoing investigations.”

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