



State of Connecticut

SENATE

STATE CAPITOL
300 CAPITOL AVENUE
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
SENATE REPUBLICAN OFFICES

April 5, 2022

Secretary Jeff Beckham
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Shawn T. Wooden, Treasurer
Office of the State Treasurer
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Secretary Beckham and Treasurer Wooden:

For the last five years the state's Municipal Accountability Review Board (MARB) has overseen the finances of West Haven. Considering the alarming audit conducted by CohnReznick LLP and released on Friday, April 1, 2022, which details the depth of the alleged abuse of CARES Act funds by the City of West Haven, we are writing to seek clarity as to how MARB was unaware or unable to address the city's inadequate controls and systemic issues that allowed for the alleged misuse and abuse of COVID-19 relief funds.

In a press release issued by the Office of Policy and Management, it was stated that *"auditors uncovered significant deficiencies in internal controls, policies, and procedures unrelated to the CRF program which permeate across the local government organization. In several instances, the report highlights conditions which the MARB has previously identified and required the City to take corrective action."*

What specific conditions were highlighted by the audit that MARB "has previously identified and required the City to take corrective action"? Please provide us with a record of issues previously identified by MARB and when those issues were recorded.

If these are the same issues now highlighted by the audit, why was corrective action never taken before?

The actions that allegedly occurred in West Haven are disturbing. But even more unsettling is the fact that West Haven was under the financial guidance and oversight of the MARB when the alleged abuse of funding occurred.

MARB was created to oversee and assist municipalities struggling with financial distress and mismanagement. To have this extra level of state oversight and still see the alleged theft and misuse of funds occur shatters public trust and must be further examined to restore confidence in our government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin C. Kelly".

Senator Kevin C. Kelly
Senate Republican Leader

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul M. Formica".

Senator Paul M. Formica
Senate Republican Leader Pro Tempore