

**UNION COUNTY  
WATCHDOG ASSOCIATION**

*Shining a Light  
on Government*

908-709-0530  
Fax: 908-709-9209  
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202 Walnut Avenue • Cranford, New Jersey 07016

October 16, 2006

Hon. Stuart Rabner, Esq.  
New Jersey Attorney General  
P.O. Box 080  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
(609)292-4925  
(Sent via email and first class mail)

**RE: Union County prisoners being inappropriately sent home on wristlets**

Dear Attorney General Rabner:

Enclosed please find:

1. A letter dated May 23, 2006 addressed to Attorney General Zulima Farber
2. Extract of transcript State of New Jersey v. Thomas MacDermant. The entire transcript can be viewed at <http://unioncountywatchdog.org/docs/MacDermant.pdf>

On May 23, 2006 I wrote Attorney General Farber's office and asked her to investigate an incident that occurred in Union County which showed that a prisoner who was a county employee and reportedly a close friend of the Union County Manager, was sentenced to serve time for a D.W.I. conviction and was inappropriately sent home on a wristlet.

I never received a response from Farber's office acknowledging receipt of my letter. In light of recent revelations which have shown Farber's close relationship to Union County Freeholder Angel Estrada, I am resubmitting my request for an investigation into this matter to your office.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Tina Renna  
President

Attachments

**Our Mission**

*The Union County Watchdog Association, Inc. is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization working on behalf of residents and taxpayers to monitor Union County government and advocate for the elimination of waste, corruption and incompetence. We believe that good government can only be achieved through a system of checks and balance - a system that includes the watchful eye of the people.*



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Zulima Farber  
Attorney General  
State of New Jersey  
Department of Law and Public Safety  
Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex  
Post Office Box 080|  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
(609)292-4925  
(Sent via email and first class mail)

May 23, 2006

RE: D.W.I. prisoners being inappropriately sent home on wristlets

Dear Ms. Farber:

I have been concerned with an incident that was brought to light in Union County this past summer. A third time D.W.I. prisoner was inappropriately allowed to go home on a wristlet.

According to a court transcript obtained by the Union County Watchdog Association which can be viewed at:  
[www.unioncountywatchdog.org/docs/macdermant.pdf](http://www.unioncountywatchdog.org/docs/macdermant.pdf)  
Judge Walter Barisonek ruled county employee Thomas MacDermant was allowed to leave jail on a wristlet without the permission of his sentencing judge. The *New Jersey Law Journal* reported this on March 13, 2006 (attached).

The transcript states that MacDermant was sentenced to a mandatory 180 days in the Union County jail by Judge Jones out of the Roselle Municipal Court. The Judge received an anonymous letter informing her of MacDermant's freedom. She then had him rearrested and sent back to jail.

Whether MacDermant was given special privileges by being released remains to be seen. An Open Public Records Act request filed by the UCWA in an attempt investigate how many third time D.W.I. defenders were allowed to go home and attend AA meetings of their own free will, was set by the county at \$364.00 for the public to obtain these records. The county had no press release regarding this issue and it's left to our citizen watchdog group to investigate.

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During a public comment portion of a recent freeholder meeting I attempted to ask questions about this incident and Freeholder Chairman Al Mirabella offered not one word in response. Nor did the other eight freeholders who were present or the county manager. They were so quite during my questioning I could hear them breathing. So much for public information.

As I'm sure you're aware, in Union County, by statute, it is the freeholders who hire and appoint the county manager. They also hire the warden to run the county jail. Therefore it is the freeholders, who are responsible for this inappropriate freedom for D.W.I. offenders.

The county freeholder's are hindering our investigation into how many D.W.I. offenders were allowed to go free in Union County. This leads me to suspect that the problem may have been widespread. If they had nothing to hide than they would be forthcoming with the public. Perhaps they are still releasing prisoners inappropriately.

I find it absurd that I, as a private citizen and taxpayer, can not hold my elected officials accountable for this issue of public safety. I am writing to you in hopes that your office can and will.

Sincerely,

Tina Renna  
President

attachment

SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY  
LAW DIVISION : UNION COUNTY  
SUMMONS NO. X-042792  
App. Div. Dkt. No. A-6384-04T1

STATE OF NEW JERSEY, :  
 :  
 v. : Transcript of  
 : Hearing  
 THOMAS R. MAC DERMANT, :  
 :  
 Defendant. :

PLACE: Union County Courthouse  
2 Broad Street  
Elizabeth, New Jersey

DATE: Thursday, June 23, 2005

BEFORE: HONORABLE WALTER R. BARISONEK, A.J.S.C.

TRANSCRIPT ORDERED BY:

ALEXANDER W. BOOTH, ESQ. (Brownstein Booth &  
Associates)

APPEARANCES:

STEVEN KAFLOWITZ, ESQ.  
Assistant Union County Prosecutor

ANTHONY N. PALUMBO, ESQ. (Palumbo & Renaud)  
Attorneys for Defendant

APD- ED DIVISION  
WILLIAM DONEGAN, ESQ.  
Assistant Union County Counsel

SEP 16 2005

ANTHONY MACK, ESQ.  
Borough of Roselle Municipal Prosecutor

*Jeffrey C. The...*  
ACTING CLERK

FREDERICK D. WOLFF, III, C.S.R.  
Official Court Reporter  
Union County Courthouse  
2 Broad Street  
Elizabeth, New Jersey

1 Thursday, June 23, 2005

2 This is State of New Jersey v. Thomas

3 MacDermant, Summons X-042792. This is a matter that  
4 originates out of the Roselle Municipal Court for a  
5 D.W.I. conviction under 39:4-50. Notice of appeal has  
6 been filed by the County of Union pursuant to Rule  
7 3:23-2 as an aggrieved party.

8 Basically as I understand the issue, Mr.  
9 MacDermant was sentenced to 180 days in the Union  
10 County Jail by Judge Jones out of the Roselle Municipal  
11 Court. He was brought to the county jail, from the  
12 county jail was transported to Delaney Hall, was  
13 subsequently released from Delaney Hall on the wristlet  
14 program and there was an anonymous letter sent to the  
15 Municipal Court in Roselle as well as to the municipal  
16 P.J. who is Judge Gross, for Union County -- P.J.  
17 meaning presiding judge -- who then in turn referred  
18 the matter to me alleging that there was an improper  
19 transfer to Delaney Hall and then an improper release  
20 to the wristlet program, monitoring program is what  
21 Delaney Hall calls the program, and that Judge Jones  
22 then directed that the defendant be apprehended,  
23 brought back to the Union County Jail and be  
24 incarcerated at the Union County Jail; not be permitted  
25 at Delaney Hall, not be permitted to be on a wristlet