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Wayne County, Ficano sued in whistleblower complaint

By Ross Jones

WXYZ) DETROIT - Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano and the county itself have been sued by a former member of the county's executive team, alleging he was fired for blowing the whistle on millions in waste.

Stephen MacDonald, who worked for Wayne County for approximately one year, was hired to find inefficiencies inside the county and provide a turnaround plan to help tackle the county's mounting deficit.

He filed a whistleblower suit yesterday claiming that he was fired in January for exposing misuse of federal and state dollars by the Ficano administration.

According to the suit, MacDonald drafted a November 2011 report that showed "the county was violating federal and state law." His findings showed evidence of taxpayer fraud, corruption, and gross mismanagement of taxpayer funds, among other things, says the lawsuit.

Six days after a WXYZ-TV reporter contacted a Wayne County official about MacDonald's report, he was terminated by the county.

A May 2011 report by 7 Action News Investigator Scott Lewis showed evidence that Ficano was misusing designated roads dollars to pay his own appointees who did little or nothing for the county's roads.

Wayne County officials could not be reached for comment.