

Laura's Detroit Blog

From [Laura Sternberg](#),
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No Good Solution Regarding Kilpatrick

Tuesday was a day of drama in the scandal surrounding Detroit and its mayor. Facing a vote by the city council that went well beyond the hollow gestures they've limited themselves to in the past, Kilpatrick allegedly considered resignation for the first time.

The moment, however, passed.

Unfortunately, there is no good option to the drama that keeps Detroit in a negative spotlight and the mayor and council submerged in muck:

- **Innocent until proven guilty:** A key principle that gets lost in the media coverage and drama is that Mayor Kilpatrick is innocent until proven guilty. This means that the process, like it not, must play out. Unfortunately, the process plays out to the detriment of the city, both in terms of image, revitalization momentum and time.
- **Ouster by governor:** An option often mentioned in articles about the text-messages scandal is that the Governor has the power to remove the mayor. Even so, it is rarely explored as a realistic alternative. The city council's 5-4 vote to make a formal request to the Governor, however, puts more pressure on her regarding the situation. Frankly, a move to oust him on her part would open a Pandora's box. Some of the principles at issue are Due Process and the state's power over local governments. According to a *Detroit Free Press* [article](#), city residents are split anyway about whether the governor should take a short cut through the process.
- **Forfeiture proceedings:** Up until now, the city council's response to the scandal has been more about talk than action. Of course, it was the general consensus that the council had no real authority to oust the mayor anyway. Apparently, they found a loop hole in the form of forfeiture provisions in the city charter -- think impeachment. According to an [article](#) in the *The Detroit News* featuring the opinion of Larry Dubin, a law professor at the University of Detroit Mercy, the council has the authority to oust the mayor on the basis of his violation of city charter provisions. The problem is that the forfeiture provision is untried and the procedure nonexistent. The proceedings will also keep the council and mayor tied up in the scandal and will be open to attack from the mayor on appeal.
- **Voluntary resignation:** Councilwoman JoAnn Watson said it best after a long day of resolutions and drama. According to an [article](#) by Rochelle Riley in the *Detroit Free Press*, Watson is quoted as saying, "He said [resignation] would look like he was giving up," she said. "I said no, it would look like he was stepping up. It acknowledges that the city is bigger than you."

More information:

- [Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick's Track Record](#)

About Poll
What is your stance regarding Mayor Kilpatrick?
<input type="radio"/> Innocent until proven guilty
<input type="radio"/> Ousted by governor
<input type="radio"/> Removed from office through city council and forfeiture provisions in

city charter

Voluntarily
resign

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