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CAMPAIGN REFORM



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Democracy21
Fred Wertheimer, President



January 20, 2010

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

Congratulations on the outstanding government reform agenda outlined in your State of the State Address. We applaud your efforts to create a more transparent and engaging state government and are especially encouraged, on this eve of the Supreme Court's *Citizens United v. FEC* decision, about your pledge to create a system of public financing of elections for your state. In an era of secret spending and unlimited amounts of special interest money, changing the way campaigns are financed is now more important than ever.

As member organizations of the national reform community, we write to you to thank you for your leadership in proposing public financing of elections and we hope you will work with the legislature to pass the legislation early in the 2011 legislative session. With your support to forward this policy, New York could become the new leader in efforts to raise up the voice of everyday Americans in the political process.

With publicly financed elections, candidates would run on a base of small contributions from individuals back home and could focus on their constituents rather than corporations, trade groups and other special interests. At the federal level, we have all endorsed the Fair Elections Now Act, legislation that would create a public financing system similar to the New York City model.

As the cost of running for office continues to rise, candidates for the Assembly and Senate will be required to spend more time raising money and less time focused on their constituents.

Your leadership can change this.

Passing a public financing system in New York would send a strong signal to the rest of the country and the U.S. Congress that the American people are ready for a change in the way our political system works.

Sincerely,

Nan Aron
President, Alliance for Justice

Daniel Weeks
President, Americans for Campaign Reform

Michael Waldman
Executive Director, Brennan Center for Justice

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Michael B. Keegan
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Heather Smith
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