



**A Campaign of Citizens Union and
the League of Women Voters of New York State**

MEMORANDUM

To: Interested Parties
From: Dick Dadey, Citizens Union
Date: September 18, 2014
Subject: Comment on Yesterday's Court Decision on Redistricting Ballot Language

While news coverage of Wednesday's court ruling focused on the removal of the word "independent" from Proposition 1 on the ballot, the ruling included major affirmations about the ballot language that were largely overlooked.

The court rejected the plaintiffs' effort to revise the ballot's description of the redistricting process. Instead, the court decided to keep the original Board of Elections language, finding that there was nothing "incomplete, inaccurate or even misleading about the text in its current form."

In addition, the court agreed that the voting requirement for approval of a proposed redistricting plan "stands as a safeguard against one party dominance in redistricting" decisions, which is an essential element of a fair and impartial process.

Proposition 1 is a unique opportunity to reform an entrenched, broken redistricting system that only serves the self-interests of Albany legislators. For the first time in decades, New Yorkers will have a chance to vote for an open and fair redistricting process that will hold legislators accountable to the people and ensure they cannot draw lines to favor incumbents or political parties.

Whether the commission is called "independent" or not is immaterial. Wednesday's decision in no way changes the substance of the amendment, which bans partisan gerrymandering. We urge all New Yorkers to vote for progress on Election Day by voting yes on Prop 1.

Updated to include the support of the League of Women Voters of New York State.