

**CITIZENS UNION
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW YORK STATE
NEW JERSEY FOUNDATION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT
NYPIRG
REINVENT ALBANY
TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN**

MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

A.2737 (Paulin)

January 27, 2014

Title: An act to amend chapter 154 of the laws of 1921, relating to the port authority of New York and New Jersey, in relation to the port authority deemed an agency; and to repeal article XV-B of section 1 of chapter 154 of the laws of 1921, relating to the port authority of New York and New Jersey, in relation to the records of the port authority.

Summary of Legislation: This bill makes clarifications to Chapter 534 of the laws of 2014, which ensures that the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is subject to the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) of New York, and the Open Public Records Act of New Jersey.

Statement of Support: Our groups supports passage of **A.2737 (Paulin)**, a chapter amendment that would deem the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey an "agency" in regards to Articles 6 and 6-A of Public Officers Law and provide equivalent status to the Port Authority under New Jersey law.

The sprawling Port Authority controls billions of dollars in transit fees and bridge tolls and owns and manages the major airports, bridges and ports surrounding New York City, as well as the World Trade Center site. Both New York and New Jersey residents—as well as the myriad businesses that are impacted by its functioning—have a vested interest in its open and accountable functioning.

Notwithstanding its singular role in the lives and economy of New Yorkers, the Port Authority is currently exempt from New York's major sunshine law: the Freedom of Information Law.

The recent scandal around the closing of the traffic lanes on the George Washington Bridge demonstrates the need for greater accountability and transparency for the Port Authority. The reality is that it's long overdue for the Port Authority to be subject to the same transparency laws as other state agencies, as Justice Brandeis observed "sunshine is the best disinfectant."