

CITIZENS UNION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
COMMON CAUSE/NY
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS/N.Y.S.
NEW YORK PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP

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Contact:

DeNora Getachew 917-912-5471

Susan Lerner 917 670-5670

Barbara Bartoletti 518 465-4162

William Mahoney 518 436-0876

NEWS RELEASE

**GOOD GOVERNMENT GROUPS CALL ON STATE SENATORS TO
MAKE GOOD ON THEIR PROMISES OF REFORM**
*Deliver over 1,000 glue sticks from New Yorkers demanding that
reconvened State Senate Stick With Reform*

With the State Senate set to reconvene this afternoon, good government groups Citizens Union of the City of New York, Common Cause/NY, the League of Women Voters/N.Y.S. and NYPIRG urged senators to stick with their promises of enacting real reform. The groups pointed to statements made by various senators from both parties during the month-long stalemate declaring the crisis was fueled by the need for meaningful reform, not power politics. The good government groups urged the senators to stick with their promises for reform.

The groups noted that over 1,000 New Yorkers across the state signed up by email to send their senators glue sticks to physically emphasize the Stick With Reform message. The glue sticks are being delivered to the senators before the start of today's session, along with the groups' call to pass election, campaign finance, and ethics reform – all urgently-needed improvements which were deferred due to the leadership gridlock. The statement accompanying the glue sticks is attached.

“The month-long Senate stalemate brought New York State government’s dysfunction to the forefront of New Yorkers, as well as the nation’s, attention in an unprecedented manner – prompting them to urge Senators to end their partisan bickering and get to work on the important issues they were sent to Albany to address. Now that this impasse is behind us, it is imperative that the Senate prove to their constituents that their promises at the beginning of this struggle to reform Albany politics were not made in vain. Senators must demonstrate their commitment to reform upon reconvening by promptly enacting meaningful election, campaign finance and ethics reforms,” said DeNora Getachew, Director of Public Policy and Legislative Counsel of Citizens Union.

“When we asked our members over the past 2 weeks whether they wanted to send a message to their state senators to stick to their jobs and pass needed reforms, the response was strong and immediate. K.T., from Macedon said it best: ‘Compromise and pass needed reforms!!’,” said Susan Lerner, Executive Director of Common Cause/New York. “During the past month of previously unfathomable break-down

in the State Senate, leaders of both parties emphasized over and over that they had thrown the body into chaos for the sake of reform. It is now incumbent on the Senate to make good on those oft-repeated promises of enacting reform. That means more than procedural rules reform, but must include ethics, campaign finance and election reform as well.”

Barbara Bartoletti of the League of Women Voters of New York State said, ““ The time for rhetoric passed long ago. Any credibility on reform is now on the line. They must do meaningful rules reform today and move to the other major reforms in the next few months.” She continued, “The voters now are watching closely.”

“ The member item allocation that will likely pass this week will be the first litmus test of whether the Senate has any intention of following through with their promises of a more egalitarian and representative legislative body, ” pointed out Bill Mahoney of NYPIRG.

The groups also promised to work with the Senate to insure that any new rules governing senate procedure would contain the reforms promised by both parties.

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SUPPORT ELECTION, ETHICS
AND CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Consistently throughout this legislative session, our groups have strongly supported efforts to reform not only the procedural rules under which the State Senate operates, but also to address systemic deficiencies in our election, campaign finance and ethics laws.

In ending the stalemate that froze all legislative action in the Senate, the leaders of both parties promised to pass legislation that serves the interests of New Yorkers and will “restore their faith in this great body.”

Hundreds of New Yorkers in the past weeks have asked us to carry this message to you:

Stick With Your Word
Stick With Your Promises
Stick With Reform

Today, as the Senate reconvenes, we bring you over 1,000 glue sticks, one for each person who asked us to convey their message, “Get back to work and stick with reform” directly to you. The names, locations and the more than 500 comments these New Yorkers asked us to relay to you are also included.

Now that the needed tax extensions and other pressing fiscal clean-up matters were passed last week, we urge the Senate to pass election, campaign finance, and ethics reform measures to solve the all too clear deficiencies in our state’s laws. Long-promised reforms in those areas should not be delayed further.

We also look forward to the enactment of promised rules reforms, which should include not only equal distribution of resources for staffing and equitable distribution of member items, but a reinvigorated committee procedure and means for members to move bills to the floor. We stand ready to share our expertise regarding legislative procedures to assist in the drafting of those rules.

We acknowledge that there are other necessary and comprehensive reforms that must be addressed to solve the systemic problems that led to legislative gridlock, and will engage the Senate on these issues in the coming months.

For questions, please call:

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