



**CENTER FOR LAW AND
SOCIAL JUSTICE**
AT MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE,
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



December 14, 2020

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

Dear Governor Cuomo,

We write to urge you to immediately order the New York State Department of State to release the \$750,000 in funds appropriated to the Independent Redistricting Commission so that they can begin their critical work soliciting public input to draft new state and congressional legislative lines.

The Commission has hired its Co-Executive Directors and begun holding regular meetings to set its goals and agenda. At its most recent meeting, Commissioner Martins stated that the Commission was more than 8 months behind because of the delay in the release in this funding. This is a gross injustice to democracy and the people of New York State who voted to approve this new Commission.

Without funding, the public has no way to participate in this redistricting process as the Commission has no way to hire staff to undertake major projects including creating a public website, collaborating and meeting with organizations representing diverse communities throughout the state, and scheduling the 12 public meetings set to be held in the coming year.

We find it highly concerning that this Commission has not received its relatively small funding appropriation, yet the State Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment has received more than \$1 million in the last year. A further delay in the release of these funds undermines the

transparent, bi-partisan, and independent process voted for by millions of New Yorkers as a ballot initiative in 2014. We again urge you to immediately release these funds.

Sincerely,

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