

**Reinvent Albany • Alliance for Quality Education
Citizen Action of New York • Citizens Budget Commission
Citizens Union • Common Cause • New York Fiscal Policy Institute
Housing Works • League of Women Voters of New York State
Manhattan Community Board Five
New York Public Interest Research Group
New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness
Permanent Citizens Advisory Council to the MTA (PCAC)
Statewide Senior Action of NYS • Strong Economy for All Coalition
Tenants Political Action Committee • Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Westchester for Change**

May 30, 2023

VIA EMAIL

Chairperson Elizabeth Fine
Assemblymember Kenneth Zebrowski
Senator Leroy Comrie
Assemblymember Joseph Giglio
Senator George Borrello

Re: Publish and maintain a searchable database of PACB meeting materials

Dear Members of the Public Authorities Control Board (PACB):

In the interest of public transparency and the spirit of New York's Freedom of Information Law, we ask that you publish and maintain a searchable online list or database of meeting agendas, materials, and meeting minutes. The PACB website currently provides meeting agendas and materials for one meeting at a time. This sharply reduces PACB's public accountability, and makes it very hard for the public, scholars, and members of the media to keep track of PACB's deliberation and decision making.

The PACB's job is to review certain public authorities' projects that have a fiscal impact on the state. Therefore, the meeting materials – including the applications submitted by authorities to explain the fiscal impact of projects – are of great interest to the public, since by definition these projects involve some form of spending public funds, whether the expenditure is in the form of bond issuance, a direct grant, or a tax abatement.

Currently, in order to view agendas and materials from previous meetings of the PACB, the public must file a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request, which can take

weeks – if not months – to be filled. The public should not have to download information from the website before the materials are taken down. Preemptively posting and maintaining all materials online would not only give the public easier access; it would also ease the work of the Division of Budget FOIL officers.

Making agendas and materials available on your website is a common-sense step that will ensure the public has information and tools necessary to understand and track projects which can cost tens of billions of dollars.

Thank you for your attention to our request.

Sincerely,

John Kaehny
Executive Director
Reinvent Albany

Laura Ladd Bierman
Executive Director
League of Women Voters of NYS

Marina Marcou-O'Malley
Policy and Operations Director
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Nathan Gusdorf
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Myra Saul, Diane Torstrup, Susan Van
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Organizers
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Cc. Comptroller Tom DiNapoli
Senator Liz Krueger
Assemblymember Helene Weinstein