



The League of Women Voters of New York State
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THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
of New York State

July 19, 2016

Alfonso David, Esq.
Counsel to the Governor
Executive Chamber, 2nd Floor
Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Mr. David:

This letter is in reference to **A.9711 (Buchwald)/S.6865-A (Ranzenhofer)**, a bill that would allow for Freedom of Information Law appeals to be conducted in a timely and just manner. The League of Women Voters of New York State recommends that you urge Governor Cuomo to sign this important legislation into law.

The above referenced legislation expedites the process for determining appeals of FOIL decisions. Under the existing law, a denial of request for records may be overturned by an appellate court, but the government agency has nine months after service of a notice of appeal to perfect the appeal. This bill would reduce the time period agencies have to perfect an appeal to 60 days after the date of filing of the notice of appeal, and provides for preference in hearing such appeals, further expediting the appellate process.

Government transparency is critical to encouraging informed and active citizen participation in government. LWVNYS shares in the concerns raised by other civic organizations and journalists that agencies purposefully delay FOIL requests which they find to be problematic and inconvenient. This practice undermines the ability of citizens to leverage FOIL as the resource for open and transparent government it is intended to be.

The League of Women Voters of New York State urges that the governor support this measure to boost openness in government in New York.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dare Thompson".

Dare Thompson
President, League of Women Voters of NYS