

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

***NEWS RELEASE***

**For immediate release:**

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**STATEMENT ON CLOSED DOOR LEADERS' MEETING  
& BUDGET PROCESS**

The Governor and legislative leaders reportedly held a behind-closed doors meeting this morning to negotiate outstanding budget issues. Civic groups [Citizens Union](#), Common Cause/NY, League of Women Voters/N.Y.S. and NYPIRG urged that *such discussions take place in public*. The groups said the secret meeting adds to mounting evidence that this year's process is actually *less* transparent and *less* understood than the budget process has been in years [past](#). The groups also repeated their call to avoid the use of messages of necessity so lawmakers and the public have a reasonable opportunity to review and comment on the budget.

The groups pointed to the disparity between the rhetoric of reform and transparency and the unfolding current budget process:

Governor Spitzer said on January 16, 2007:

"For decades, the budget process has been characterized by secrecy, gamesmanship and a lack of accountability. These common-sense measures are an excellent first step toward opening up the process and helping ensure timely budgets with greater transparency and accountability."

<http://www.state.ny.us/governor/press/0116071.html>

Speaker Silver promised on January 16, 2007

"[a] . . . more transparent, more easily understood process."

<http://www.state.ny.us/governor/press/0116071.html>

On January 29, 2007 Majority Leader Bruno said:

"For more than a decade, the Senate Majority has been fighting to reform the State budget process, not only to ensure that a budget is passed on time, but to make the budget more open and accountable."

<http://www.senate.state.ny.us/pressreleases.nsf/2e0e86fa9105ed5a85256ec30061c0be/fbc621431967ad7b8525727200760b3e?OpenDocument>