

CITIZENS UNION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
COMMON CAUSE/NEW YORK
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS/N.Y.S.

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Good Government Groups Support State Senate Effort to Pass Real Ethics Reform
See Senate Amendment as Necessary Since It Adds Needed Teeth to Enforcement
Original Bill A Modest but Incomplete Step Forward

The good government organizations Citizens Union, Common Cause/NY and the League of Women Voters today applauded the State Senate's effort to pass meaningful ethics reform and commends the Senate for its attempt to improve upon the original bill passed by the Assembly in June.

Though the Assembly bill is a welcome step in the right direction, the Senate's proposed chapter amendment, as introduced by Senators Sampson and Squadron, is a required addition that significantly strengthens the package and boosts the effort to reform ethics oversight and enforcement.

The civic groups see the amendment as an essential element of the ethics reform legislative package. Without the amendment, these groups today made clear that they cannot support the original stand-alone bill, even though it represents a modest yet incomplete improvement over the status quo.

Dick Dadey, executive director of Citizens Union, said, "Though it did not pass the Senate today, it is better to wait and get it right, rather than pass a less than sufficient solution. The Senate's approach adds real teeth to ethics enforcement, which is why we cannot support only the original bill. We changed the ethics law two years ago and got it wrong. We can't afford to get it wrong a second time which is why we need the Senate's approach to succeed."

"The Senate did the right thing by not settling for the Assembly bill, which by itself, does not go far enough. Integral to our support for the Senate's ethics package is the fact that the amendment significantly enhances accountability with a 3 year 'sunset' clause," pointed out Susan Lerner, Executive Director of Common Cause/NY. "Such a clause forces a review of the law to ensure that it is serving the public as promised and ensures that the momentum to continue improving ethics oversight does not let up. We commend the Senate for taking the time to achieve meaningful reform and their willingness to 'stick with it' until they can pass a strong package such as the one they introduced today."

Barbara Bartoletti, Legislative Director of the League of Women Voters of New York State, stated, "The League applauds the Senate Democrats for putting forward this chapter amendment which, along with the Assembly bill, is good reform. Without the chapter

amendment, particularly the campaign finance discrete enforcement unit which for the first time provides teeth to the campaign finance laws, the Assembly bill does not meet our standard of real reform.”