



January 19, 2012

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo  
New York State Capitol  
Albany, New York 12247

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We write to thank you for your leadership and promised efforts to make public financing of elections for New York State a top priority in 2012. As leaders of workers and their families nationally, and in New York State, we are painfully aware of the influence that big corporate donations have on our democracy. Your New NY Agenda laid out an ambitious plan to change New York, including public funding of elections. We write to express our readiness to stand behind you in this campaign and achieve this important victory for democracy together.

Our labor organizations represent workers across the spectrum of the New York economy – public sector and private, service and manufacturing. Unit-ing us all is a commitment to the idea that all workers deserve a voice, and that in a democracy, wealth should not determine political power. The status quo system of elections in New York, with their sky-high donation limits and lack of public matching funds, undermine these principles. To have a truly just and equal society, we must have elections that reflect the will of the people, not the privilege of the wealthy few. We need public funding of elections to achieve this goal.

Across the nation, citizens despair that our elected leaders are beholden to special interests and unable to serve the public interest, at the very moment when we need leadership the most. We have seen this disenchantment with our economy and government spill over in the growing Occupy Wall Street protests. The tens of thousands of New Yorkers who have taken part in these protests have many worthy concerns about the inequality of our economy, and the fact that our government seems to respond to the needs of the wealthy, not those who need it most. Reforming our system of elections, putting a check on corporate power in Albany, and empowering the people of New York through a system of public financing of elections, would provide a beacon of hope that our democracy can effectively respond to the voice of the people.

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Under your leadership, reform in New York State – modeled after New York City’s long-standing and successful system of public financing – is an achievable and worthy goal. We would welcome the opportunity to work with you towards this goal.

We look forward to hearing more about your plans to enact public campaign financing, and urge you to make it a top legislative priority for 2012.

Sincerely,



Larry Cohen,  
President - CWA



Mary Kay Henry  
President - SEIU



Bob King  
President - UAW