

FAIR ELECTIONS: MAKING ALBANY WORK FOR ALL NEW YORKERS



A campaign for voting rights & comprehensive campaign finance reform as the first order of business in the 2019 New York Legislative Session

New Yorkers deserve a responsive, accountable government. Voter turnout in New York is among the lowest in the nation, due in part to antiquated procedures for registration and voting that discourage participation. And our campaign finance system favors the wealthy over everyday, working New Yorkers. To tackle the crises we face in housing, living wage jobs, criminal justice, affordable health care, transportation, climate, fair taxes, and more, we must transform a campaign finance system that advantages the interests of the few over those of the many.

The shift in power in the New York State Senate—and a Governor and an Assembly prioritizing democratic reforms—presents an unprecedented opportunity to unrig the rules, strengthen our democracy, and incentivize elected officials to represent the values of the people of the state. **A broad coalition of individuals and groups across New York is coming together to ensure that an overhaul of New York's voting and campaign finance systems is the first order of business in the 2019 New York Legislature.** This Fair Elections reform package would:

- ✓ **Increase the power of small donations.** It is critical we implement a small donor matching system for state elections, including District Attorneys, like the successful programs in New York City and Connecticut. This gives everyday people the means to run for office and represent their communities relying on small donations instead of large checks. After the Supreme Court allowed unlimited, secret money to flow into our elections, small donor matching funds remains the most powerful way to combat the influence of big money. By matching small dollar donations 6-to-1, we can amplify the voices of women; of people of color; of the working and middle classes; and of any and all under-represented New Yorkers in the political process. Adequate enforcement as well as robust candidate support services would ensure the matching funds program runs smoothly.
- ✓ **Limit the influence of big money.** The very wealthy and corporations shouldn't be allowed to buy elections. We can put a check on their outsize influence by closing the "LLC loophole," which allows mega donors to funnel limitless amounts to candidates, and by reducing New York's unusually high contribution limits, among other improvements.
- ✓ **Make it easier, not harder, to vote.** Including but not limited to automatic voter registration, early voting, same day registration, online voter registration, no excuse absentee voting, new party enrollment deadlines, pre-registration for 16- and 17-year-olds, full voting access for people with disabilities, and codify into law New York's new policy to extend voting rights to all New Yorkers with past convictions.

To join the coalition, your organization can sign on here: bit.ly/FairElexNYSignUp

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