

The Honorable Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

July 29, 2021

**RE: Ensuring Public Financing Reform Remains Fully Intact in the For the People Act, and that Passage Occurs Before the August Recess**

Dear Senate Majority Leader Schumer:

As active organizations in New York, we want to express our gratitude for your work to get the *For the People Act (S1)* passed in the Senate. The *For the People Act* is critical as we counter the attack on Black and brown voting rights, the dominance of big money, hyper-partisan districting and the erosion of democratic norms and principles over the last decade. **We urge you to do everything in your power to get this bill passed fully intact by the August recess.** The forthcoming delivery of census data to the states, and subsequent launch of state redistricting processes, makes this deadline incredibly urgent. Permitting voter suppression and other structural unfairness is wrong, and unhealthy for a democracy already in trouble.

As the coalition that fought for and won a public financing of elections program in New York State, **we write specifically to urge that public financing of elections with small donor matching not be removed from the *For the People Act* in the final hour.**

We took note when Senator Manchin's attempt at bipartisan compromise on S1 removed small donor matching from the bill. His offer failed to convince even one Republican Senator to support debating the bill, let alone passing it. Thankfully, we've seen no indication that Senator Manchin himself opposes public financing of elections. As Governor of West Virginia, [he supported](#) it. No Democrat has publicly opposed small donor matching (in fact, [all have publicly supported](#) it), and [you've committed](#) to keeping it in the bill.

In light of all of this, we see no reason that this critical program should disappear in any final bill; however, our experience with some publicly supportive New York State legislators resisting change when it mattered most will keep us on high alert until this fight is over. We are counting on you, as Majority Leader, to ensure that public financing with small donor matching stays in.

We need vocal champions on this issue in the Senate, which is one reason we've copied Senator Gillibrand. She's been an outspoken advocate for public financing of elections, and we need her voice in support of small donor matching, specifically, now more than ever. Small donor matching has been shown to work for decades in New York City, to reduce the reliance on wealthy white donors (e.g., 91% of all federal and state donations come from white donors), and thus to lessen the undue influence of big money in politics. It is essential to building a more just democracy and we hope that you (and Senator Gillibrand) will be unwavering on its importance as you fight to pass the *For the People Act*.

Please do everything you can to pass S1 by the August recess -- including continuing to communicate loudly and consistently your intent to do so -- and ensure that it is fully intact when it goes to President Biden's desk for signing.

Sincerely,  
*In alphabetical order by organization...*

Dr. Robert Waterman  
**Affircan American Clergy and Elected  
Officials (AACEO)**

Georgina Sanchez  
**Asociación de Mujeres Progresistas, Inc.**

Sue Dodell  
**Bend the Arc Jewish Action Riverdale**

Jennifer Epps-Addison  
**Center for Popular Democracy**

Rosemary Rivera & Jessica Wisneski  
**Citizen Action of New York**

Susan Lerner  
**Common Cause New York**

Rabbi Rachel Timoner  
**Congregation Beth Elohim**

Maria Quackenbush  
**Dutchess County Progressive Action  
Alliance**

Ricky Silver  
**Empire State Indivisible**

Dave Palmer  
**Fair Elections for New York**

Jennie Spector  
**Indivisible Nation BK**

Deborah Porder  
**Indivisible Scarsdale**

Trish Anderton  
**Inwood Indivisible**

Laura Ladd Bierman  
**League of Women Voters of New York  
State**

Susan Lerner  
**Let New York Vote**

Joseph Sackman  
**Long Island Activists**

Lisa Tyson  
**Long Island Progressive Coalition**

Arlenis Morel  
**Make the Road New York**

Mark Hannay  
**Metro New York Health Care for All**

Jonathan Westin  
**New York Communities for Change**

Paul Westrick  
**New York Immigration Coalition**

George Albro  
**New York Progressive Action Network  
(NYPAN)**

Mary Thorpe  
**NYPAN of the Southern Finger Lakes**

Blair Horner  
**New York Public Interest Research  
Group (NYPIRG)**

Lee Winkelman  
**New York Religious Action Center of  
Reform Judaism (RAC-NY)**

Sochie Nnaemeka  
**New York Working Families Party**

Franchelle Parker  
**Open Buffalo**

Bree Carlson  
**People's Action**

Denise Marbury  
**PersistNY**

Katie Chao  
**Progressive Schenectady**

Kathryn Levy  
**Progressive East End Reformers**

John Kaehny  
**Reinvent Albany**

Livvie Mann  
**Rise and Resist**

Sean Eldridge  
**Stand Up America**

Emily Adams  
**Tompkins County Progressives**

Livvie Mann  
**True Blue New York**

Ting Barrow  
**Uptown Progressive Action**

Diane Torstrup  
**Westchester for Change**

Alyssa Aguilera  
**VOCAL-NY**

Cc: The Honorable Senator Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510