



April 22, 2013

Dear Colleague,

As former and present Secretaries of the State of Connecticut, we are very proud of our state for broadening our democracy by adopting a public financing system for our legislative and statewide campaigns. As former legislators, we understand intimately the fundraising aspects of standing for election, and as Secretaries of the State we have been responsible for administration and implementation of campaign finance laws.

As New York State looks to adopt a public financing system, we encourage current decision makers to look at the Connecticut example to see how a comprehensive package of reforms with public campaign financing at its core can improve the legislative process, allow elected officials to spend more time with their constituents, result in bold policies that support working families, and relieve lawmakers of much of the fundraising burden.

Connecticut's experience shows that public financing can lead to a more diverse legislature that spends its time focused on the merits of proposals, and not on attending special interest fundraisers. The program is also incredibly popular on both sides of the aisle with 77 percent of current legislators using public financing. All state-wide offices are held by candidates that ran on public financing. The program works, and we are starting to see the benefits of removing the influence of big donors and special interests.

When we were running for office in Connecticut, we spent numerous hours of each day on the telephone and at events asking people for large donations. Today, legislators are spending more time with their constituents and hearing from a more diverse set of voices. Moreover, since public financing has been adopted, the legislature has passed policies that are more in line with the public's priorities.

Although we understand that each state is unique, we believe that the Connecticut experience as contained in this report, can be very helpful as you consider public financing of campaigns for New York. We stand ready to answer any questions or speak to New York legislators, and we hope that you will enact a bold public campaign finance policy to ensure everyday New Yorkers are heard in Albany.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Miles Rapoport in black ink.

Miles Rapoport  
President of Demos  
Former Secretary of the State of Connecticut

Handwritten signature of Denise Merrill in black ink.

Denise Merrill  
Secretary of the State of Connecticut

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