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Transparency Groups Call On Governor Cuomo to Issue Executive Order Saving State Emails For 7 Years

New York should match proposed federal email transparency;
no reason Governor's email transparency contingent on legislature.

March 13, 2015

Our groups call on Governor Andrew Cuomo to match proposed federal email transparency standards by issuing an executive order that requires that all state emails be saved for a minimum of 7 years.

We call on Governor Cuomo to issue this executive order regardless of what the state legislature does or does not do – Governor Cuomo has the unilateral authority to increase email transparency, and he should.

President Barack Obama's administration has proposed a policy of saving all federal emails for a minimum of 7 years based upon the recommendation of the National Archives. The Federal government is adapting this standard because saving emails for at least 7 years is good management policy and increases transparency. President Obama's proposed email policy does not depend on Congress extending the Freedom of Information Act to itself.

While our groups strongly support extending the state Freedom of Information Law to include the state legislature, we see no reason why Governor Cuomo cannot adopt a policy of saving state emails for 7 years regardless of what the legislature does. The issue here is increasing government transparency, and Governor Cuomo has the unilateral power to do that by matching the proposed federal policy of saving emails for 7 years.

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