



## If It Ain't Broke, Don't Fix It

### Watchdog Groups Oppose Fundamental Change to Appointments, Terms or Composition of NYC Campaign Finance Board, a National Model

#### [2019 Charter Revision Commission Is Reviewing Potential Changes at Hearing Tonight on Campaign Finance and Election Issues](#)

Citizens Union, Common Cause, the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), and Reinvent Albany released a [joint statement](#) today opposing any fundamental changes to the way members of the NYC Campaign Finance Board are chosen, the length of their terms or the composition of the Board. The watchdog groups also do not support changes to the manner in which the agency's Executive Director is chosen. These changes are being considered by the 2019 Charter Revision Commission at a hearing held tonight, Wednesday, February 20th.

The New York City Campaign Finance Board for 31 years has managed a public matching program that stands as a bulwark against the growing tide of big money that has dominated the political system nationally and in other states. It is a model for change in Washington and has been replicated by other localities including in recent years in Baltimore, Philadelphia and the District of Columbia. The system has been refined and improved over time to amplify the voice of everyday New Yorkers through matching small contributions. This tradition of improvement continued last year when the 2018 Charter Revision Commission put on the ballot and the voters affirmed an \$8:\$1 match on small donations and lowered contribution limits substantially.

The Board of the Campaign Finance Board has played an essential role in establishing the model system New York City can be proud of. Its first Chair Father Joseph A. O'Hare and his successor Frederick A.O. Schwartz, Jr. established a culture of integrity and fairness that extends to current members like former Chair Richard J. Davis and current Chair Frederick P. Schaffer.

If the City was starting from scratch, our groups would not recommend a system of elected officials making direct appointments of board members who regulate those same elected officials. However, the Board has such a long history of distinction that we question the need to fundamentally change it. The culture of the Board and conduct of its members have and continue to overcome the usual structural conflicts inherent in direct appointments.