



Reinvent Albany Commends Court of Appeals Decision Creating Greater Transparency of IDAs and Their Subsidiaries

*IDA Affiliates Will Be Required to File Reports Shedding Light on Their
Operations*

Reiterates Call for Substantial Increase to ABO's Budget

Reinvent Albany praises the New York State Court of Appeals for their decision Thursday requiring subsidiaries of Industrial Development Agencies (IDAs) to file the same reports required in statute that IDAs are required to file. [The reports, which include information on budgets, procurement, audits and other operations,](#) are a fundamental part of the Public Authorities Reform Act of 2005 and 2009 to ensure the state's hundreds of authorities and their affiliates are transparent and accountable. [Unfortunately, even with the legal mandate, many authorities do not submit required reports.](#)

The legal victory by the ABO is the latest in a series of efforts to increase transparency of local authorities. [The ABO issued rules in September requiring IDAs post information on their websites on their policies for distributing business subsidies, which was backed by Reinvent Albany.](#)

578 state and local authorities in New York State collectively spend \$51 billion a year and hold \$270 billion in public debt.¹ The Authorities Budget Office, with a budget of \$1.936 million and 11 staff, has the Herculean task of monitoring and overseeing all state and local authorities. It oversees enormous and important state authorities like the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), New York State Thruway, New York Power Authority, and the Empire State Development Authority as well as myriad Local

¹ Authorities Budget Office, Annual Report on Public Authorities in New York State, July 1, 2017, p. 18. Available at: <https://www.abo.ny.gov/reports/annualreports/ABO2017AnnualReport.pdf>.

Development Corporations and Industrial Development Authorities operated by counties, cities and towns.

[Reinvent Albany is a strong supporter of the work of the Authorities Budget Office, and has closely monitored the state's largest authority or agency - the MTA - including its governance, ethics, Freedom of Information Law \(FOIL\), and budget and capital plan transparency.](#)

[Reinvent Albany and fiscal and good government watchdogs have called for increasing the ABO's budget by 50 percent,](#) and we call on Governor Cuomo and the legislative leaders to follow through this year in providing substantially more money for the oversight agency.

We also believe the Senate should pass legislation providing more powers to the Authorities Budget Office to ensure required reports are done by authorities. S.1872 (Comrie)/A.220 (Paulin), for example, has passed the Assembly and advanced to third reading on the Senate calendar. The bill would give the ABO greater powers to remove board members of authorities not complying with budget, annual, and audit reporting required by the public authorities law.