



hispanicfederation

January 22nd, 2021

Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins  
Capitol Building  
Albany, N.Y. 12247

Assembly Speaker Heastie  
Capitol Building  
Albany, N.Y. 12248

Senate Minority Leader Ort  
Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12247

Assembly Minority Leader Barclay  
Legislative Office Building  
Albany, N.Y. 12248

Dear Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Heastie, Senate Minority Leader Ort, and Assembly Minority Leader Barclay,

We write to urge you to address the ongoing withholding of funding dedicated for New York’s first Independent Redistricting Commission by ordering the immediate release of \$1 million in funding through SUNY Research foundation.

The \$1 million in funding appropriated for this Commission has now been delayed for more than 9 months. Although a recent report stated that the funding was now set to be released, at their most recent meeting, the Co-Executive Directors of the Commission stated that SUNY Research Foundation has indicated these funds may be deferred for 3 more weeks. The Co-Executive Directors stated that the reason for this postponement was not shared by SUNY Research Foundation.

This continued delay in funding has limited the Commission’s ability to begin its critical work and stifled the ability for the public to provide input into this new process. Article III, Section 5-b, of the New York State Constitution states the following with regard to funding for the Commission:

*“(i) The state budget shall include necessary appropriations for the expenses of the independent redistricting commission, provide for compensation and reimbursement of expenses for the members and staff of the commission....”*

Our joint organizations believe that funding for the Commission must be allocated immediately in order to comply with this constitutional mandate. A further delay in the release of these funds undermines the transparent and independent process voted for by millions of New Yorkers as a ballot initiative in 2014. We again urge you to resolve this issue so that funds can be released immediately.

Sincerely,

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NALEO Educational Fund

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LatinoJustice PRLDEF

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Executive Director  
Citizens Union

John Kaehny  
Executive Director  
ReInvent Albany

C.C. Governor Andrew M. Cuomo