

**Reinvent Albany**  
**American Oversight • BetaNYC • Common Cause/NY**  
**Defending Rights & Dissent • Earthjustice**  
**Freedom of the Press Foundation**  
**League of Women Voters of New York State**  
**The Legal Aid Society • The Media and Democracy Project (MAD)**  
**National Press Photographers Association (NPPA)**  
**New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU)**  
**New York Coalition for Open Government**  
**New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG)**  
**The Radio Television Digital News Association**  
**Society of Environmental Journalists**  
**The Surveillance Technology Oversight Project (S.T.O.P.)**  
**TIMBER**

March 11, 2025

Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
New York State Senate

Speaker Carl Heastie  
New York State Assembly

Minority Leader Robert Ort  
New York State Senate

Minority Leader William Barclay  
New York State Assembly

Dear Legislative Leaders,

We write to urge you to join together to pass the same bills strengthening the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) in both houses this coming [Sunshine Week \(March 16-22\)](#). New York's FOIL turned 50 last year and remains the single most important transparency tool New Yorkers have. Unfortunately, FOIL is not keeping pace with changes in technology, journalism, and case law, and it has been years since it was significantly upgraded.

Over the last two years, the Senate and Assembly have separately marked Sunshine Week by passing different FOIL bills. This year, we urge you to pass the same bills. Our groups have worked together with experts on FOIL, the legislative staff, and legislators to develop a package of four realistic and carefully-crafted bills intended to make today's FOIL more effective and modern (three of these bills passed one house last session).

**Please pass these four bills in each of your houses for Sunshine Week 2025:**

- **Report FOIL Activity ([S452 \(Hoylman-Sigal\)](#) / [A2321 \(McDonald\)](#))** – Passed the Assembly last session.
- **Reduce Agency FOIL Response Time ([S2520 \(Skoufis\)](#) / [A3425 \(Raga\)](#))** – Advanced to third reading in the Senate last session.

- **Strengthen FOIL Attorneys' Fees ([A950-A \(Steck\)](#) / [S1418-A \(Liu\)](#))** – Passed the Senate last session.
- **Limit Commercial FOIL Exemption ([S5000 \(Hoylman-Sigal\)](#) / [A1410 \(Rosenthal\)](#))** – Passed the Senate last session.

Sincerely,

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