



September 29, 2026

Mayor Zohran Mamdani
City Hall

Re: Please Do Something to Strengthen NYC Ethics and Anti-Corruption Efforts

Dear Mayor Mamdani,

We write today to urge you to act on three long-overdue ethics and anti-corruption measures:

- Work with City Council to get voter approval for changes to the City Charter that ensure **core oversight agencies are fully funded** and protected from political retaliation with **independent budgeting**.
- Issue an Executive Order requiring your administration's senior officials to **disclose written COIB opinions** – especially if they cite it in response to public questioning about apparent conflict of interests.
- **Issue an Executive Order requiring officials to recuse from matters related to their former clients.**

You were elected on the heels of the worst corruption scandals New York City has seen in decades, promising to “put an end to the culture of corruption” and the scandals that have plagued City Hall.

However, nine months into your administration, you have not advanced any new policies or laws to address long-standing, systemic corruption risks, and have done little to restore the strength of the city's internal watchdogs at the Department of Investigation (DOI) or Conflict of Interest Board (COIB). It's [business as usual](#) for New York City's lobbying industry, with no changes to the city's rules regarding contacts with employees' former clients.

The Commission on Government Efficiency (COGE) recommended in its final report that the city undertake “a dedicated and comprehensive review” of the City’s ethics and anti-corruption programs and laws. It called for creating a special panel that would develop recommendations to strengthen public integrity and accountability.

We urge you to set up this blue-ribbon ethics task force, and to advance long overdue anti-corruption measures. However, setting up this task force should not preclude you from acting quickly and decisively on the three anti-corruption measures outlined above, and described in detail below:

- **Fully fund oversight agencies, and protect them with independent budgeting.** DOI and COIB have long supported Charter reforms that would safeguard their budgets by tying them to a fixed percentage of other agency budgets or the city expense budget. These long-overdue proposals should be advanced to voters. Your newly appointed DOI commissioner, Nadia Shihata, [presented specific reforms to COGE](#), which were supported by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg and [civic groups](#). We urge you to work with the City Council to advance these reforms as Charter amendments.
- **Require disclosure of written COIB opinions for senior officials.** Mayor Adams [reversed](#) a de Blasio-era practice encouraging commissioners to disclose written COIB ethics guidance. Because COIB’s advice is confidential, senior officials have in the past mischaracterized the guidance they received, or falsely claimed they were prohibited from disclosing it. We ask that you issue an Executive Order requiring commissioners and high-ranking City Hall officials to disclose written COIB guidance, (with privacy protections), especially if they cite it in response to public questioning about apparent conflict of interests.
- **Require officials to recuse from matters related to their former clients.** Incoming public servants must sever ties with businesses and interests that have dealings with the city – but they are under no limitations when it comes to former employers, clients, or business partners. This loophole was exploited by the previous administration, most prominently by Mayor Adams’ first Chief of Staff, Frank Carone. City Hall should establish a cooling-off policy that prohibits officials from working on matters involving former clients or interests during a cooling-off period, similar to New York State’s “reverse two-year bar”.

We look forward to working with your administration to strengthen public trust in City government. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with your team to discuss how to advance these proposals and other ideas you may have for increasing the integrity and effectiveness of NYC government.

Sincerely,

John Kaehny
Executive Director, Reinvent Albany

Grace Rauh
Executive Director, Citizens Union

Evan Davis
Manager, Committee to Reform the State Constitution

Susan Lerner
Executive Director, Common Cause NY

Erica Vladimer
Founding Director, Harassment-Free New York

Kai Rosenthal
Co-President, League of Women Voters of the City of New York

Megan Ahearn
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