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NEWS RELEASE

REFORM GROUPS CALL ON SENATE, ASSEMBLY TO BLOCK PASSAGE OF PURPORTED CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORMS CONTAINED IN BUDGET

“TAKE THE TIME TO DO IT RIGHT”

(Albany, N.Y.) A coalition of government reform organizations called on state Senate and state Assembly leaders to block action on a campaign finance reform plan that the groups called “deeply flawed and inadequate.” Instead, the groups argued that the plan must be dramatically strengthened and that such changes could be made in a matter of days.

The groups urged lawmakers to “take the time to do it right.”

There has been a virtual political crime wave at the state capital – with over 30 public officials engulfed in scandal over the past eight years. Thus, the groups stated that a Comptroller-only plan was woefully inadequate. The groups expressed their disappointment with Governor Cuomo in delivering this anemic plan, given that he has repeatedly stated his support for comprehensive campaign finance reforms, including a voluntary system of public financing for all races for state office. Moreover, we believe that this plan does not justify the governor’s agreement to end his Moreland Commission to Investigate Public Corruption. That important work should continue.

The budget bill – the public protection and government section (S.6355-D/A.8555-D) – proposes a voluntary system of public financing solely for the office of state Comptroller and only for the election in just over seven months. The plan also leaves the much-maligned New York State Board of Elections as the agency overseeing this program.

Both houses of the Legislature are scheduled to be in session through the middle of this week giving negotiators three more days to hammer out a plan that offers a comprehensive solution to the failings of the state’s campaign finance system.

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