

- **American Association of Jews from the Former USSR, NY Chapter** •
 - **American Council of the Blind of New York Inc.** •
- **Asian American Legal Defense & Education Fund (AALDEF)** •
 - **Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law** •
 - **Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled** •
 - **Center for Independence of the Disabled** •
 - **Citizens Union • Common Cause / NY** •
 - **Demos: A Network for Ideas and Action** •
 - **Disabilities Network of NYC** •
 - **League of Women Voters of the City of New York** •
 - **New York Civil Liberties Union** •
- **New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG)** •
 - **New Yorkers for Verified Voting** •
 - **Women's City Club of New York** •

October 2, 2007

Anthony Como, President
 New York City Board of Elections
 32 Broadway
 New York, NY 10004

Dear President Como:

We understand that the Board will soon be engaged in a search for a new Executive Director. We write to urge that the Board take adequate time in its search and adopt several suggestions regarding minimum qualifications and accountability measures for the position.

Few tasks are as important to the basic foundations of our system of governance as the administration of our elections. We urge you, as Commissioners of the Board who will ultimately decide who will serve as the new Executive Director, to use the following criteria as minimum standards in your deliberations:

QUALIFICATIONS

New York City deserves a public search for the position of Executive Director. Candidates should meet certain minimum standards that include:

- A strong background and experience in election administration; and
- A strong history of working in a non-partisan manner.

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ACCOUNTABILITY

- Any contract for the Executive or Deputy Executive Director should be for a fixed term of between three and five years (current policy is for an open-ended contract which either political party's appointees to the Board could prolong indefinitely); and
- The Executive and Deputy Executive Director should be subject to an annual performance review that analyzes Board performance in areas such as the percentage of poll workers attending trainings and the number of voting machine breakdowns on Election Day and be subject to publicly stated contractual goals.

The new Executive Director of the Board will face considerable challenges in the years ahead. From the outset, s/he will start off in what is shaping up to be a busy presidential election year. This individual will also help oversee the selection of new voting systems to replace the city's mechanical lever machines, wide scale changes in the training of Election Day workers, and the effort to educate the public as to changes at the polls.

We feel it vital that any candidate considered also have the following attributes:

- A demonstrated ability to work collegially with diverse constituencies;
- Experience working in large urban areas;
- An understanding of the rights and concerns of language minority voters and voters with disabilities;
- Support for public input into election administration issues;
- An understanding of the importance of an open election process; and
- A commitment to working collaboratively with groups representing New York City voters.

We make these suggestions because we recognize the importance of the successful candidate possessing the administrative skills necessary to meet these challenges. Furthermore, this individual needs to enjoy the confidence of the civic community and the public. We believe this is vital for this important position.

Thank you for considering our suggestions. We look forward to your response to our comments and to public discussions of our ideas at upcoming Board meetings.

Sincerely,

**American Association of Jews from the
Former USSR, NY Chapter**
Victor Levites, Chair
100 Church Street, Suite 1608
New York, NY 10007

**American Council of the Blind of
New York, Inc.**
Mike Godino, President
104 Tilrose Avenue
Malverne, NY 11565

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Asian American Legal Defense & Education Fund, (AALDEF)
Margaret Fung, Executive Director
99 Hudson Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10013

Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law
Lawrence Norden
161 Avenue of the Americas, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10013

Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled
Marvin Wasserman, Executive Director
2044 Ocean Avenue, Suite B-3
Brooklyn, NY 11230

Center for Independence of the Disabled
Susan M. Dooha, Executive Director
841 Broadway, Suite 301
New York, NY 10003

Citizens Union
Dick Dadey, Executive Director
299 Broadway, Suite 700
New York, NY 10007

Common Cause/New York
Krystyna Davenport
155 Avenue of the America's, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10013

Demos: A Network for Ideas & Action
Steven Carbó, Senior Program Director,
Democracy Program
220 Fifth Avenue, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Disabilities Network of NYC
Alexander Wood, Director
548 Broadway, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10012

League of Women Voters of the City of New York
Elinor Miller, Co-President
45 East 33rd Street
New York, NY 10016

New York Civil Liberties Union
Palyn Hung
125 Broad Street
New York, NY 10004

New York Public Interest Research Group, (NYPIRG)
Neal Rosenstein, Gene Russianoff,
9 Murray Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10007

New Yorkers for Verified Voting
Bo Lipari, Executive Director
PO Box 163
Mecklenburg, NY 14863

Women's City Club of New York
Ruth E. Acker, President
307 Seventh Avenue, Suite 1403
New York, NY 10001

cc: Board of Elections Commissioners
Hon. Michael Bloomberg
Hon. Christine Quinn