



June 13, 2017

Dear Governor Cuomo, Majority Leader Flanagan, Speaker Heastie, and Leader Klein:

As this year's legislative session reaches its end, we write to urge you to increase the number of charter schools that can be authorized in New York City. There are 48,000 students on charter school waiting lists and this is clearly an option that many parents are seeking for their children. There are four applicants for every charter seat in Harlem and the South Bronx, with demand highest in the city's most underserved communities.

Ninety percent of students in New York City charter schools are African-American or Hispanic and seventy-seven percent are economically disadvantaged. African-American and Hispanic students in charter schools perform significantly better than their district school peers in both reading and math. English Language Learners in charter schools performed better both on the state tests and on English proficiency exams.

In New York City's low-income communities, some students still do not have access to an excellent school. Charters can help fill that gap and ensure that all the city's students have the opportunity for a great education.

Public education is too important to be caught up in political horse-trading. The employers, civic leaders, and communities of New York City want to see continuity of mayoral control of the schools, adequate funding for district schools, AND support for the successful charter schools.

Sincerely,

John H. Banks, President, The Real Estate Board of New York
Thomas Grech, Executive Director, Queens Chamber of Commerce
Andrew Hoan, President & CEO, Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce
Hope Knight, President & CEO, Greater Jamaica Development Corporation
Nick Lugo, President, New York City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Regina Myer, President, Downtown Brooklyn Partnership
Carlo Scissura, President & CEO, New York Building Congress
Jessica Walker, President, Manhattan Chamber of Commerce
Kathryn S. Wylde, President & CEO, Partnership for New York City