



For Immediate Release

Thursday, September 8, 2022

Statement on NYS Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government

Watchdog Groups Say New Ethics Commission Should Begin Work this Month

*Governor, Attorney General, and Legislative Leaders Should Nominate Remaining
Commission Members Without Delay*

Now that the New York State Independent Review Committee composed of the State's law school deans has [approved seven out of eleven commissioners](#), we urge New York's Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government (CELG) to begin its work immediately. There are now enough commissioners appointed for a quorum – the legal minimum required to conduct business.

According to the newly enacted law establishing CELG, the agency will have no authority until the new commission meets, meaning that new investigations cannot be approved, and existing cases are in limbo. The law also empowers the commissioners to select CELG's executive director by a majority vote, and states that JCOPE's staff can only be transferred to CELG upon approval by the new commissioners. It has been over a month since JCOPE dissolved; New Yorkers are paying for an ethics commission and they deserve one that is hard at work. More so, New York institutions should not go another month without an internal ethics watchdog overseeing, and advising on, the conduct of the state's elected and appointed officials.

We also urge the Governor, Attorney General, Assembly Speaker, and Senate Minority Leader to act quickly to advance nominees for consideration to the Independent Review Committee. New Yorkers deserve a fully appointed ethics commission.

It is also important that the Commission reflect the state's diverse racial, ethnic, and gender groups, as well as geographical areas. Elected leaders should ensure that the remaining nominees add diversity to the existing appointments.

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