



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Renewing the Call for Campaign Finance Reform as Recent Scandals Give New Impetus for Rules Overhaul

BRAD HOYLMAN April 5, 2013

“The indictments of public officials from both parties over the last week underscore the rotten and pervasive ‘pay-to-play’ culture in Albany. We need to increase transparency dramatically and wean Albany off a system that rewards legislators with campaign contributions for supporting causes backed by special interests.

I congratulate the U.S. Attorney for pursuing these cases and agree with him that they raise alarming questions about the pervasiveness of the corruption in New York State government. But with every crisis there is an opportunity. In addition to prosecuting to the fullest extent of the law those who have violated the voters’ trust, we should take this opportunity to promulgate steps to systematically reform campaign finance.

New York’s campaign finance laws are among the most porous and least enforced in the nation. Contribution limits are far too high and there are numerous glaring loopholes through which individuals, PACs and corporations can exceed even these limits. Worse, there are no restrictions that prevent those who directly do business with the State from making contributions to public officials. It is no wonder, then, that graft and bribery are often found to be corollaries in a system awash with special interest money.

I urge my fellow legislators and the Governor to implement a system this legislative session that includes public financing, matched contributions and lower contribution limits for candidates for state offices. Nothing less than the public trust in their government is at stake.”