October 26, 2018

Hon. Andrew Cuomo  
Governor, New York State  
NYS State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We write to respectfully request that you fill at least one of the two vacancies on New York State Department of Health’s Public Health and Health Planning Council (PHHPC) with consumer advocates who can provide a perspective on issues affecting healthcare consumers based on personal or professional consumer advocacy experience.

PHHPC has enormous power and responsibility with respect to the public health and health care delivery system. The State must provide consumers a voice in the major decisions that affect them to ensure the system appropriately meets their needs.

While the current council represents diverse viewpoints, it has no members who represent the consumer view. The consumer advocate seat has been vacant for over a year. By contrast, there are eight representatives of hospitals, health systems and nursing homes -- twice the number of “at least four” specified in the Public Health Law.

In addition, PHHPC holds its meetings at times when members of the public are not likely to attend. PHHPC often does not hear from health consumers or public health advocates before advising the commissioner. This makes it especially important that consumer advocates be on the council.

The swift appointment of at least one consumer advocate, and preferably two, to PHHPC will help the council do its vital work with efficacy and fairness.

Thank you for the consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Brad Hoylman  
State Senator

Harvey Epstein  
Assembly Member

Dick Gottfried  
Assembly Member

Carolyn Maloney  
Member of Congress

Jerrold L. Nadler  
Member of Congress

Nydia Velázquez  
Member of Congress
Corey Johnson
NYC Council Speaker

Brian Kavanagh
State Senator

Liz Krueger
State Senator

Gustavo Rivera
State Senator

Deborah J. Glick
Assembly Member

Yuh-Line Niou
Assembly Member

Amy R. Paulin
Assembly Member

Linda Rosenthal
Assembly Member

James Skoufis
Assembly Member

Margaret Chin
NYC Council Member

Carlina Rivera
NYC Council Member