

26April 2017

The Honorable Benjamin Kallos
NYC Council Member, 5th District
244 East 93rd St.
New York, NY 10128

RE: 1130-A of 2016 – Increasing cap on public campaign funds – SUPPORT

Dear Councilmember Kallos,

I am writing on behalf of Friends of the Earth U.S. to voice our support for the proposed change to the administrative code of the city of New York via 1130-A, in relation to increasing the cap on public funds available to candidates. Thank you for your leadership on this matter, which would strengthen our cities democracy by closing the existing gap in our cities public campaign funding program.

Specifically, 1130-A would increase the public matching grant from an arbitrary partial match of 55% to a full match. This would mean that the first \$175 of every amount raised from city residents would be matched by a ratio of 6 to 1.

The majority of Americans today agree that outside money has too much influence over our political system. Strengthening New York City's strong and popular public campaign finance program empowers the best candidates to run for office, and not just those with easy access to wealthy mega-donors to fund campaigns. This helps make New York's elected officials more diverse and accountable to everyday voters while also abating the influence of deep-pocketed anti-environment special interests.

In the decades since public campaign finance was introduced, New York City has seen public finance programs realign candidates' focus back to ordinary citizen voters and away from concentrated powerful private interests. An important element to this success is the city's 6 to 1 small donor matching program that de-incentivizes candidates from seeking outside money. Yet our current programs leaves a "big dollar gap" of more than one-third of a candidate's campaign spending limit that is not covered by this program. 1130-A would close this gap and create a fully funded public matching grant.

We urge the City Council to move forward and pass this important measure.

Sincerely,



Jon Fox
Senior Democracy Campaigner
Friends of the Earth - United States