



Hon. Richard A. Brown
Queens County District Attorney
125-01 Queens Boulevard
Kew Gardens, NY 11415

October 25, 2017

Dear Mr. Brown,

I write as Chair of Citizens Union about a proposal we are making to address an issue directly affecting your office.

Since its founding in 1897, Citizens Union has been New York's pre-eminent good government group dedicated to improving the integrity, transparency and accountability of our governmental institutions and strengthening our democracy. One of our principal areas of concern and focus has been the financing of political campaigns. It is in that regard I write to you.

There has been a considerable amount of press recently about the propriety of District Attorneys accepting campaign contributions from a lawyer or law firm that has a matter before their office. Whatever the legality of such contributions, it is obvious that they create at least the appearance of a conflict of interest. Moreover, if a District Attorney makes a decision favorable to a client of such a contributing lawyer or law firm, it leaves his or her office open to questions that could easily be avoided simply by avoiding such contributions.

Accordingly, Citizens Union believes that it is in the public interest, and in the interest of each District Attorney's office in its good name and reputation, for incumbent District Attorneys to publicly and voluntarily declare that they will not accept and, indeed, will return campaign contributions from any lawyer or law firm that has business before their office or comes to represent a client in a matter before their office. Similarly, we are calling upon any candidates for the office of District Attorney to make the same commitments and to agree to return campaign contributions from any lawyer or law firm that the candidate knows during the campaign or comes to know after the campaign has business before that office. We recognize that there are other reforms worthy of consideration, including changes in state ethics laws and public financing of campaigns for District Attorney, and we look forward to advancing such reforms – hopefully with your input and support. In the meantime, we urge you to make a clear declaration that you will no longer accept contributions from lawyers or law firms having business before your office.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Randy Mastro".

Randy M. Mastro
Chair



Hon. Cy Vance
New York County District Attorney
One Hogan Place
New York, NY 10013

October 25, 2017

Dear Mr. Vance,

I write as Chair of Citizens Union about a proposal we are making to address an issue directly affecting your office.

Since its founding in 1897, Citizens Union has been New York's pre-eminent good government group dedicated to improving the integrity, transparency and accountability of our governmental institutions and strengthening our democracy. One of our principal areas of concern and focus has been the financing of political campaigns. It is in that regard I write to you.

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Randy M. Mastro
Chair



Hon. Michael E. McMahon
Richmond County District Attorney
130 Stuyvesant Place
Staten Island, NY 10301

October 25, 2017

Dear Mr. McMahon,

I write as Chair of Citizens Union about a proposal we are making to address an issue directly affecting your office.

Since its founding in 1897, Citizens Union has been New York's pre-eminent good government group dedicated to improving the integrity, transparency and accountability of our governmental institutions and strengthening our democracy. One of our principal areas of concern and focus has been the financing of political campaigns. It is in that regard I write to you.

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Randy M. Mastro
Chair



Hon. Darcel D. Clark
Bronx County District Attorney
198 East 161st Street
Bronx, NY 10451

October 25, 2017

Dear Mr. Clark,

I write as Chair of Citizens Union about a proposal we are making to address an issue directly affecting your office.

Since its founding in 1897, Citizens Union has been New York's pre-eminent good government group dedicated to improving the integrity, transparency and accountability of our governmental institutions and strengthening our democracy. One of our principal areas of concern and focus has been the financing of political campaigns. It is in that regard I write to you.

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Randy M. Mastro
Chair



Hon. Eric Gonzalez
Kings County District Attorney
350 Jay Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

October 25, 2017

Dear Mr. Gonzalez,

I write as Chair of Citizens Union about a proposal we are making to address an issue directly affecting your office.

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