



STATE OF NEW YORK  
**EXECUTIVE CHAMBER**  
ALBANY 12224

**ANDREW M. CUOMO**  
GOVERNOR

July 24, 2017

Chairman H. Carl McCall  
State University of New York  
State University Plaza  
353 Broadway  
Albany, NY 12246

Chairman William C. Thompson, Jr.  
City University of New York  
205 East 42nd Street  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Chairs McCall and Thompson:

I write to call your attention to an urgent problem. Voter registration rates in New York State are unacceptably low. Our public academic institutions are no exception. Recent data has shown that voter registration rates at many of New York's public colleges are lagging behind other higher education institutions nationally.

All New Yorkers, regardless of political affiliation, should be informed of their right to vote and of the services available to them in pursuit of exercising that right. For SUNY and CUNY students, New York State law requires each campus to provide all students with voter registration forms at the beginning of each school year, as well as in January of each Presidential election year. Additionally, Federal law requires every campus Disabled Student Service (DSS) office to provide students with an opportunity to register to vote by offering them a registration form and providing assistance as needed.

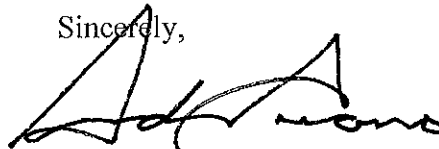
Yet despite these laws, current registration and participation rates indicate that we must do more to inform students of their ability to exercise this important right.

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PERFORMANCE ★ INTEGRITY ★ PRIDE

I am therefore directing SUNY and CUNY to review and investigate their voter registration practices and policies -- both at the system level and on each campus -- to ensure that all laws are being followed. At the conclusion of the investigation, SUNY and CUNY must develop an action plan identifying how they will each address educating students of their voting rights and ensuring that University administrators are meeting their obligations under the law.

Thank you for your efforts in undertaking this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew M. Cuomo". The signature is stylized with a large, prominent "A" at the beginning and a long, sweeping underline.

ANDREW M. CUOMO

cc: Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher  
Chancellor James B. Milliken