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DECEMBER 1, 2004
POSITION APPROVED BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Vote: UNANIMOUS

COMMITTEE:

PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Presiding Chair: Fran Levenson

Presented by: Elizabeth Lubetkin Lipton
Beverly Gross

POSITION:

The WCC joins a coalition of civic organizations (in formation) in support of the **ROADMAP FOR REFORM: 10 STEPS LAWMAKERS CAN TAKE TO CHANGE ALBANY.**

ROADMAP FOR REFORM:
10 STEPS LAWMAKERS CAN TAKE TO CHANGE ALBANY

- Step One: REDISTRICTING**
Support the creation of an independent redistricting commission based on the State of Iowa's successful model.
- Step Two: CAMPAIGN FINANCE**
The senate should support the Governor's campaign finance legislation and go to conference committee with the assembly.
- Step Three: PUBLIC AUTHORITIES**
The Governor should convene a summit on public authorities reform.
- Step Four: ELECTIONS**
The legislature should re-activate the HAVA conference committee
- Step Five: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**
The Governor should issue an executive order to modernize the state's Freedom of Information Law by requiring FOIL-able documents to be available via the internet.
- Step Six: ETHICS**
The Governor and legislators should agree to ban gifts from lobbyists and create an independent ethics commission.
- Step Seven: BUDGET**
The Governor should approve budget reform legislation and work to strengthen it in 2005.

Step Eight: LEGISLATIVE RULES
Publicly urge Senator Bruno and Speaker Silver to adopt legislative rules reform.

Step Nine: LOBBYING
The Governor should drop his opposition to meaningful lobbying reforms and the senate should begin a conference committee on this issue.

Step Ten: CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
Support change to the selection process for constitutional convention delegates.

Roadmap Endorsed By:
Common Cause / NY
Citizen's Union
The League of Women Voters
NYPIRG

RATIONALE:

The Women's City Club of New York has long taken positions to reform and change the way Albany functions so as to make it more responsive to the needs of New Yorkers.

The WCC has taken positions previously supporting Steps Two – Nine above.

The rationale for supporting Steps One and Two follows:

Step # 1: Redistricting.

Presently, the Senate is responsible for redistricting Senate seats, as is the Assembly. It is believed that both houses do so along party lines, making their own self interests the primary concern. Redistricting through an independent, non-partisan commission would address this concern.

Step # 10: Constitutional Convention

Presently, the Senate is mainly responsible for the selection of the delegates to be voted on from each Senate district. The delegate selection process was added to the State Constitution (section 2, Art. XIX), in 1894, and has not been changed since. Consequently, it does not address equal or proportional representation issues (ideas that were not recognized in the 19th century), does not reflect New York State's diversity, and tends to allow control by the same powers that currently exert control over the state government.

Conclusion

As the details of each of the ten proposals have not yet been fully worked out, the Women's City Club of New York has joined the coalition of civic organizations in order to participate in, have input and work on the final formation of the positions.