

June 28, 2022

Hon. Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
Executive Chamber
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

We, the undersigned, are writing to urge you to sign, [S09460/ A10498](#), which lowers class sizes in New York City Schools. This bill was overwhelmingly passed by the New York State Legislature on June 3, by a vote of 147 to 2 in the Assembly and 59 to 4 in the State Senate, and it calls for class size caps to be phased in over five years in all New York City public schools.

If enacted, this momentous bill would finally fulfill the promise of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (“CFE”) lawsuit, in which the state’s highest court ruled in 2003 that NYC children were denied their right to a sound education under the state constitution, in large part because of excessive class sizes. Last year, you committed to fully funding the Foundation Aid formula that resulted from the CFE decision. Now it is time that our students finally receive the smaller classes that are their due.

For too long, city students have struggled in classes that are 15 to 30 percent larger than those in the rest of the state. These excessive and inequitable class sizes have deprived them of the close feedback and teacher support they need to succeed. While all students benefit from smaller classes, the research shows that those who benefit the most are children of color, English language learners and students with disabilities, who make up the majority of students in the NYC public schools.

For years, parents, educators and advocates have fought to reduce class sizes in NYC public schools to ensure students get the individualized attention they need to succeed. For many years, in NYC Department of Education surveys, K12 parents have maintained that reducing class size was their top priority among the changes they would like to see in their schools. 99% of NYC teachers say lowering class size would be the best way to improve our schools. Research shows that smaller classes will also lead to a reduction in teacher attrition, and thus will result in a more experienced and a more effective teaching force over time.

Eminent economists have estimated that the benefits of smaller classes are twice as large as the costs. We urge you to sign this bill immediately, so that NYC children can soon be provided with the smaller class sizes that students in the rest of the state already receive.

Sincerely,

Jamaal Bowman Ed. D.

State Senator Jessica Ramos

State Senator Robert Jackson

State Senator John Liu
State Senator Jose M. Serrano
State Senator Liz Krueger
State Senator Julia Salazar
State Senator Gustavo Rivera
State Senator Cordell Cleare
State Senator Jabari Brisport
State Senator Brad Hoylman
State Senator Kevin Parker
State Senator Alessandra Biaggi
Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas
Assemblymember Yudelka Tapia
Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon
Assemblymember Cathy Nolan
Assemblymember Manny De Los Santos
Assemblymember Brian Barnwell
Assemblymember Marcela Mitaynes
Assemblymember Edward Gibbs
Assemblymember Taylor Darling
Assemblymember Harvey Epstein
Assemblymember Phara Souffrant Forrest
Assemblywoman Latrice Walker
Assembly Member Emily Gallagher
NYC Council Education Chair Rita Joseph
NYC Council Member Shekar Krishnan
NYC Council Member Shahana Hanif
NYC Council Member Lincoln Restler
NYC Council Member Tiffany Cabán

NYC Council Member Alexa Avilés

NYC Council Member Erik Bottcher

NYC Council Member Julie Won

NYC Council Member Julie Menin

NYC Council Member Eric Dinowitz

NYC Council Member Mercedes Narcisse

NYC Council Member Chi Osse

Class Size Matters

Alliance for Quality Education

Churches United for Fair Housing

Education Law Center

Housing Works, Inc.

Inwood Indivisible

INCLUDEnyc

Literacy Assistance Center

Network for Public Education

NPE Action

New York Communities for Change

NY State Allies for Public Education

New York State Council of Churches

NY Progressive Action Network

Strong Economy For All Coalition