

November 22, 2022

**An Open Letter to Jay Jacobs, Christine Quinn,
and Members of the New York State Democratic Committee**

The 2022 midterm elections clearly demonstrated that the Hudson Valley is a national battleground for control of Congress, and a key indicator of our Democratic Party's performance and potential in New York State. It is also common after challenging elections for us to look within to determine how we should move forward.

Rather than pointing fingers in any one direction, or offering a blanket endorsement of our State Democratic Party's current approach, we have come together as County Chairs in the greater Hudson Valley region to propose four common sense reforms that will make our state party more (small d) democratic in the way it operates, bring more voices to the table, and offer a way forward, together.

PROPOSAL 1: Engage the NYSDC's Executive Committee as an active, collaborative decision-making body that meets monthly to discuss and take action on an agenda circulated a week in advance.

Suggested agenda items include:

- Standing Committee progress reports, including goals, objectives and timelines
- Development and monitoring of annual planning activities (see Proposal 2)
- Updates and information sharing on county and state party operations

PROPOSAL 2: In partnership with the Executive Committee, Standing Committee Chairs, and County Chairs, develop the following planning documents for approval by the full State Committee membership at its Spring 2023 meeting:

- The NYS Democratic Party's annual goals and objectives
- An annual operational budget and fundraising plan
- A plan to invest in our county committees, including direct and substantive funding, shared staff, tools, education, and other infrastructure supports
- A process to recruit and fully populate all Standing Committees and subcommittees with a diversity of members from across the state
- A framework for coordination and shared messaging development between the NYSDC, DSCC, DACC, DCCC and DNC
- A 2022 campaign debrief of what worked and what to do differently going forward
- A process for developing the 2024 campaign plan

PROPOSAL 3: Provide an internal communications infrastructure that enables and facilitates committee communications and organizing at all levels of membership. Suggested infrastructure items include:

- A digital platform with individual and group messaging capabilities that will connect State Committee members, Executive and Standing Committee members, County Chairs, and Caucuses
- Internal communications guidelines, best practices, and ongoing support
- New member / new chair orientations and trainings

PROPOSAL 4: Empower State Committee members to serve as informed representatives of the official organization of our State Party. Suggested reforms include:

- In-depth caucus and Standing Committee working sessions at biannual State Committee meetings
- New regional and cross-district caucuses who meet between biannual meetings for relationship building and development of shared goals
- Regular reporting out of all committees and caucuses

It is our belief that these are the first steps toward building a stronger, more resilient Democratic Party that can win up and down the ballot, each year, and across New York State. The command-and-control organizational model does not serve our party. Only an inclusive approach to decision making can bring our diverse party together, and lay the groundwork for us to effectively evolve, innovate, strategize, organize, and WIN.

We are asking that Executive Committee Chairwoman Christine Quinn and Chairman Jay Jacobs convene a meeting of the NYSDC Executive Committee before the end of the year, to present, discuss, and adopt a plan to implement these reforms. Enacting these changes will also serve to provide a space for us to review additional proposals to reform our party's operations.

Your Greater Hudson Valley Democratic Party Chairs,

Columbia County - Sam Hodge
 Dutchess County - Michael Dupree & Julie Shiroishi (NY State Vice Chair)
 Greene County - Lori Torgersen
 Orange County - Zak Constantine
 Putnam County - Stephen Papas
 Rockland County - John Gromada
 Sullivan County - Anne Hart
 Ulster County - Kelleigh McKenzie
 Westchester County - Suzanne Berger