

The Mayor argues against voter involvement as a "luxury" we cannot afford. Simply not true. Good government remains a necessity, never a luxury.  
- Corey Bearak, Queens Civic Congress, [10-16-2008](#)



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## Press Release

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### **COMMON CAUSE ALONGSIDE NYC PUBLIC ADVOCATE BETSY GOTBAUM AND OTHER CIVIC GROUPS DELIVER HUNDREDS OF CITIZEN PETITIONS CALLING ON THE COUNCIL AND MAYOR TO RESPECT DEMOCRACY**

Common Cause rallied this morning on the steps of City Hall alongside NYC Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum, good government groups and civic organizations before delivering hundreds of petitions signed by NYC voters calling on the City Council to "Respect Democracy, Let the Public Debate and Vote on Term Limits Proposal."

"Railroading the Mayor's ill-conceived proposal is not the right way to address term limits," said Susan Lerner, Executive Director of **Common Cause/New York**. "There are many aspects which need thoughtful examination regarding this issue. At the national, the state, and the local level we are supposed to be a government of laws, not exceptions for individuals. The Council should do the right thing. It should take the time to fully discuss this complex issue and, if appropriate, put it back on the ballot. Certainly, we fully expect that each and every Council Member will stand up and vote on this issue of importance to their constituents. Ducking this issue by abstaining is not acceptable. Constituents want to know where their representatives stand on respecting the public will by putting this on the ballot."

**Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum** said, "Common Cause is exactly right - the public must be granted the opportunity to debate and vote on the issue of term limits. I'm against term limits, but this isn't up to me. And it shouldn't be up to a simple majority of 26 council members, or one mayor. The signatures on this petition send a clear message to the City Council: respect democracy and put this before the voters."

"If the Council rushes ahead with its term-limits vote on Thursday, it is going to greatly fuel public cynicism and badly undermine local democracy," said Gene Russianoff, senior attorney for the **New York Public Interest Research Group**.

"Any decision on term limits must be left to the voters," said Corey Bearak, President of the borough-wide **Queens Civic Congress**, a coalition of more than 100 civic, condo, co-op, homeowner, merchant and tenant organizations. "Poll after poll confirms voters demand this ultimate role and expect their electeds to respect the public's position: 'Let The Voters Decide!' Call your council member and demand they stand up for you and oppose any legislative change to term limits that appears also to violate the City Charter."

The full petition is available at [www.CommonCause.org/NY/TermLimitPetition](http://www.CommonCause.org/NY/TermLimitPetition).

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View videos of parts of the news conference and questions:

[Susan Lerner of CC/NY, the Public Advocate, and Gene Russianoff of NYPIRG speak](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5S1_zzq3tyU)  
[[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5S1\\_zzq3tyU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5S1_zzq3tyU)]

some of the [Q&A with reporters, which includes Dick Dadey of Citizens Union and Corey Bearak of Queens Civic Congress](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMd-wiwhdY0).  
[<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMd-wiwhdY0>]

or go to the Common Cause New York [Archive](#)

[Download the Memo in Opposition to Intro 845-A.](#)

Signed by:

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