

# New York State Bar Association

One Elk Street, Albany, New York 12207 • 518/463-3200 • <http://www.nysba.org>



**DAVID M. SCHRAVER**

President, New York State Bar Association

Nixon Peabody LLP  
1300 Clinton Square  
Rochester, NY 14604  
585/263-1341  
FAX 585/263-1600  
[dschraver@nixonpeabody.com](mailto:dschraver@nixonpeabody.com)

January 22, 2014

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor  
The Capitol  
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

Recently, many members of the Legislature wrote to you to express urgent concerns about the state of primary and secondary education in New York, noting that “the quality of the curriculum has diminished.”

One of the major shortcomings of today’s curriculum is the failure to provide meaningful civics education to our state’s students. Comprehensive civics education in all grades is critical if we are to have a citizenry that understands the role and functioning of our government. Moreover, without a solid understanding of government, our children will be unable to become effective and responsible citizens or full partners in our democracy.

A recent report by the New York State Bar Association Committee on Law, Youth and Citizenship found that civics education is essential to perpetuating an active, informed and engaged citizenry, and advancement of civics education is an Association priority in 2014. Our governmental institutions, including our legal institutions and justice system, depend upon the effectiveness of today’s educational institutions to develop Americans who are educated and committed to the maintenance of the rule of law. We need future citizens who understand the institutions of constitutional democracy, including our system of law and justice. No institution in American society other than our schools can accomplish this civic mission, and the need is even greater today as we welcome new Americans to our land during an era of historic immigration levels.

I urge you to consider the critical need for civics education as you and the Legislature develop the state’s 2014-2015 budget.

Warm regards,

David M. Schraver

c: Speaker Sheldon Silver  
Assemblymember Brian Kolb  
Assemblymember Denny Farrell  
Assemblymember Robert Oaks  
Assemblymember Catherine Nolan  
Assemblymember Edward Ra  
Assemblymember Karim Camara  
Senator Dean Skelos  
Senator Jeffrey Klein  
Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
Senator John DeFrancisco  
Senator Liz Krueger  
Senator John Flanagan  
Senator George Latimer  
Senator Kevin Parker

Signatories of the letter sent to Governor Cuomo on January 10, 2014, by Assemblymembers Catherine Nolan and Karim Camara, and Senator Kevin Parker