



THE COUNCIL  
OF  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

CITY HALL  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007

October 18, 2018

Ayirini Fonseca-Sabune  
Chief Democracy Officer  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chief Democracy Officer Fonseca-Sabune:

We are writing to seek specific information on letters recently sent by DemocracyNYC to voters, thought by the Administration to be inactive, as well as any other communications or outreach efforts to voters. These letters received significant media attention, but we were also contacted directly by New Yorkers who were confused after receiving them. While we support efforts to increase voter turnout, we do have questions regarding the process used in developing these letters and your outreach efforts generally.

First, please confirm that the vendor who supplied the list of 'inactive' voters was "Civis Analytics," as well as the cost of the expenditure for the list. Additionally, was any other service or information received or requested as part of that expenditure?

Second, has any voter or election data been obtained, before or since, from this same vendor?

Third, was any attempt or outreach made to either the New York City Board of Elections or the New York State Board of Elections to receive a more timely and accurate list of inactive voters?

Fourth, was the list requested from the vendor a list of all inactive voters citywide or did it target any geographic region, political party affiliation, demographic group, or other subset of voters within the City? If not, did your outreach focus on any particular geographic region, party affiliation or demographic group?

Fifth, how did the vendor collect or obtain the data it provided to you and how current was such data at the time it was received?

Sixth, did your office, or any other office within the Administration, in any way verify the data received to confirm that the contents were accurate? If so, please describe the process.

Seventh, does your office include, or retain, any lawyers specializing in election law, for reviewing communications to voters?

Eighth, please share with us, in a machine-readable format, the raw voter data (including First Name, Last Name, Zip Code, Date of Birth, County, Address, Active/Inactive Status, and any other fields provided) as received from this vendor. If any data cleaning or checking was conducted by City employees, then please also share the cleaned version of such voter data, as was used to conduct the mailing.

Ninth, has any other outreach to voters been conducted by your office? Have any automated phone calls, or text messages, to voters been sent at the direction or under the oversight of your office?

Tenth, what were the itemized and total expenditure costs, including but not limited to acquisition of voter lists, mailing costs, and any amount paid to a contractor, of all of the voter outreach efforts, whether by mail, phone, or other method, by your office in this calendar year?

Eleventh, what steps have you taken to resolve the public confusion that your letters have caused?

Finally, is the mailing of such election-related letters, or the conducting of mass election-related phone calls, expected to become a regular practice of your office going forward? If so, at what times and for what purposes do you expect to conduct such activities?

We share your goal of increasing voter turnout, but we believe issues of voter confusion require serious consideration as well. This is particularly true if such letters, or phone calls, are expected to become a regular practice. We thank you for your assistance and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'F. Cabrera'.

Fernando Cabrera  
Chair, Committee on Governmental  
Operations

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ritchie Torres'.

Ritchie Torres  
Chair, Committee on Oversight and  
Investigations