

THE Center for Education Reform



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LEADING NEW YORK DEMOCRAT CALLS FOR MORE CHARTER SCHOOLS

Washington, D.C., January 3, 2007 – New York's new Governor, Eliot Spitzer, embraced charter schools in his State of the State address today, saying, "We must raise the charter school cap. Not only must we invest in what we know works today, we must continuously experiment with new approaches. Charter schools can play a critical role here."

Spitzer seems determined to continue the efforts of the last year to lift the cap on charters, which currently stands at 100. Prior to leaving office, Gov. Pataki tried one last time in a lame-duck legislative session to increase the cap to 250 charter schools, including 50 schools in New York City. Many reformers have been hopeful since Spitzer's campaign promise to support charters, and his post-election rhetoric seems to match.

While Spitzer's comments are promising for charter school advocates, before leaving office Gov. Pataki warned, "Let me make a prediction. They will raise the number next year, but they will gut the bill by giving the special interest groups a lot more control over how those charter schools are run."

New York Charter School Association president Bill Phillips remains upbeat. "We look forward to working with Governor Spitzer and the Legislature to bring more public charter schools to children across the state as part of the Governor's reform agenda. "

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