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Authorities in state need a lot of reform

Thursday, December 3, 2009 9:13 AM EST

The Queens Civic Congress, an umbrella organization for more than 110 community and neighborhood-based groups representing tenants, co-op and condo owners and homeowners in Queens, welcomes the agreement in Albany on legislation that introduces needed oversight and sunlight into the administration of public authorities that operate in the state.

The legislation agreed to by Gov. David Paterson and state lawmakers last month delivers sound and necessary reforms to state authorities and brings some transparency and accountability to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, city Industrial Development Agency, state Dormitory Authority, state Thruway Authority and city Economic Development Corp. and other agencies that borrow and spend billions of dollars, sell assets and pretty much operate under the public radar.

These quasi-independent agencies continue to operate, and have done so for decades, free of any meaningful oversight from elected officials or the state Legislature.

Projects like Atlantic Yards, which the MTA made possible by selling development rights to public property below market value, actually demonstrated the need for this important and much-required reform. That is why the QCC urged the governor this summer to sign such legislation.

The QCC congratulates the governor, state Senate and state Assembly for getting this reform done.

Corey Bearak
President
Queens Civic Congress
Flushing