

For Immediate Release
Contact: Allen Cappelli (718) 590-3541

August 14, 2001

FERRER BLASTS PATAKI'S APPEAL OF CAMPAIGN FOR FISCAL EQUITY DECISION

Borough President Fernando Ferrer today strongly criticized Governor Pataki's move on Monday to block Supreme Court Justice Leland DeGrasse's ruling in favor of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity, calling the Governor's appeal a devastating blow to New York City's underfunded public schools.

"By appealing the successful Campaign for Fiscal Equity lawsuit, Governor Pataki is putting our underfunded public schools in an even more dire position," said Ferrer. "Two years ago, I was proud to join Congressman Rangel, Borough President Fields, and others in fighting for New York City's fair share of State education dollars. Justice DeGrasse's decision this January was a huge victory for our 1.1 million schoolchildren, who have been denied the education they deserve because of an unjust State funding formula."

"Several months ago, in his State of the State Address, Governor Pataki acknowledged the injustice of denying New York City public schools over a billion dollars in State aid – calling the State funding formula a 'dinosaur,'" continued Ferrer. "But just like he did earlier this month with the State budget, Governor Pataki has chosen to play politics rather than fund our City schools. That is just plain wrong."

"With the new school year approaching, the State has once again robbed New York City schoolchildren and missed a real opportunity to fix a totally unfair school funding formula," said Ferrer. "I will continue to join leaders from across our City to fight the State's unconscionable actions and work to get our schools the funding they are due."

In 1999, Ferrer joined Congressman Charles B. Rangel, Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, and members of New York State's Black, Puerto Rican and Hispanic Legislative Caucuses in challenging the State's method of funding and the educational inequities affecting public school children both in the Bronx and throughout the City.

According to the Campaign for Fiscal Equity, New York City enrolls about 37 percent of the state's public school children but receives less than 35 percent of state education aid, depriving them of 285 million a year.

"The children of the Bronx, overwhelmingly working class and poor, have been and continues to be disadvantaged by the unfair allocation of State funds for education," said Ferrer. "Our children cannot be expected to succeed in the workplace without having the opportunity to get a decent education."