67 New York Lawmakers Sign Letter Calling On Ernst & Young To Release Wigdor LLP Client Karen Ward From Forced Arbitration

July 31, 2019 • News & Press

On Wednesday, July 31, 2019 a bipartisan group of 67 New York State Senators and State Assembly Members sent a letter to Ernst & Young ("EY") Chairman and CEO Carmine Di Sibio in support of Wigdor LLP client Karen Ward, who filed a declaratory judgment action earlier this month seeking to invalidate her arbitration agreement with EY.

This month, multiple outlets reported that Ms. Ward has been charged $185,000 to date just to have her claims of sexual harassment and gender discrimination against EY heard in arbitration, with her case still in the discovery phase. Had she been permitted to file her claims in court, Ms. Ward would have only had to pay $450 in filing fees to have her case heard.

The letter, led by Senators Liz Krueger and Alessandra Biaggi, and Assembly Members Aravella Simotas and Jo Anne Simon, urged EY to "reconsider its outdated approach to addressing gender inequity and show that it is committed to providing all employees with a harassment-free workplace by ensuring they have access to our justice system to address discrimination claims."

> Women like Karen Ward deserve to be heard when they say they've been sexually harassed in the workplace—not forced into private arbitration and billed $185,000 just to have their claims heard. #DoBetterEY #EndForcedArbitration https://t.co/5PEDNVvwD0
> — Wigdor LLP (@WigdorLaw) July 31, 2019

Ms. Ward is represented by Wigdor LLP Partner Michael J. Willemin and Associate Julia L. Elmaleh-Sachs.

Statement from Michael J. Willemin, Partner at Wigdor LLP:

> "We are thrilled and proud that so many members of the New York State Legislature have taken this very important stand against forced arbitration and EY. No victim of sexual harassment should ever be denied access to our court system, never mind be required to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars simply for the right to seek justice. EY should be leading by example,

> not silencing employees who have been sexually harassed or discriminated against."

Read the Full Letter Here**HuffPost**
"Ernst & Young Defies Call To End Forced Arbitration For Sexual Harassment Claims"
August 13, 2019
Read PDF
Read Online

The Daily Beast
"New York Lawmakers Blast 'Oppressive' Ernst & Young Over Sex-Abuse Case"
July 31, 2019
Read PDF
Read Online

New York Daily News
"New York lawmakers blast Ernst & Young over discrimination and sexual harassment rules"
July 31, 2019
Read PDF
Read Online

INSIDER
"A woman says she's paid $185,000 just to get her sexual harassment case against Ernst & Young heard in court"
July 17, 2019
Read PDF
Read Online**Reuters**
"NY lawmakers urge Ernst & Young to drop mandatory arbitration of harassment claims"
July 31, 2019
Read PDF
Read Online

Going Concern
"New York Lawmakers Call Out EY's 'Culture of Harassment and Discrimination'"
August 2, 2019
Read PDF
Read Online

HuffPost
"This Woman Was Charged $185,000 In Her Own Sexual Harassment Case"
July 24, 2019
Read PDF

Read Online

Law360
"Ex-Worker Says EY Sex Bias Arbitration Costing Her $185K"
July 17, 2019
Read PDF
Read Online