

# NYC Council's Women's Caucus Writes Letter Condemning NY1's Use Of Forced Arbitration In Gender-Based Discrimination Cases

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On Wednesday, August 21, 2019, the Women's Caucus of the New York City Council sent a letter to Thomas Rutledge, CEO of Charter Communications, Inc. ("Charter") denouncing Charter's stated intention to force Wigdor LLP clients Vivian Lee, Thalia Perez and Michelle Greenstein into private arbitration and deny them the opportunity to have their claims of age, gender and/or pregnancy discrimination heard in a court of law. The letter stated in part:

"It is hypocritical for a news organization like Charter Communications – which claims to be committed to providing information to New Yorkers – to push claims of wrongdoing out of the public's view and into a private, secretive forum. We call on Charter Communications and NY1 to affirm their commitment to a discrimination-free workplace by allowing Ms. Lee, Ms. Perez, and Ms. Greenstein to have their gender-discrimination claims heard in court."

✂Forced Arbitration of Gender-Based Discrimination Claims✂

We're calling on [@CharterNewsroom/](#)[@NY1](#) to follow state law & release 3 women from forced arbitration. [pic.twitter.com/QWTIGNDckz](https://pic.twitter.com/QWTIGNDckz)  
– Women's Caucus (@WomensCaucusNYC) [August 21, 2019](#)

The letter was sent just one day after seven Wigdor LLP clients, all current and/or former female on-air journalists at the Charter-owned local TV news station NY1, published an [Open Letter](#) on Medium requesting that Mr. Rutledge voluntarily release Ms. Lee, Ms. Perez and Ms. Greenstein from their arbitration agreements.

Wigdor LLP filed two separate lawsuits alleging that NY1 systemically marginalizes and discriminates against older, female on-air talent in favor of men and younger women. The [first lawsuit](#), filed on June 19, 2019 on behalf of Ms. Lee as well as NY1 anchorwomen Roma Torre, Kristen Shaughnessy, Jeanine Ramirez and Amanda Farinacci, alleges that after Charter took control of NY1 in 2016, Plaintiffs each experienced a reduction in air time, were passed over for prime anchoring assignments and were denied promotional opportunities.

The [second lawsuit](#), filed on July 30, 2019, alleges that Ms. Perez was fired while in her third trimester after she complained that she had been discriminated against on the basis of pregnancy, and Ms. Greenstein was fired shortly after returning from maternity leave after she complained that she was denied on-air opportunities because she was a new mother.

[Read the full letter from the Women's Caucus of the New York City Council](#)

**Law360**

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