



## **Passed Voting Reform Legislation**

Voting is about to get easier for New Yorkers. New York has long been behind most of the country when it comes to voting. Our election laws were archaic making it difficult for people to vote and resulting in low voter turnout. However, both the Assembly and Senate passed 7 election laws bills. Five of these reforms have been signed into law by Governor Cuomo. However, not all are effectively immediately and some will require additional money to be added in the state budget.

1. **EARLY VOTING.** Will take place for the first time in New York. (Thirty-eight states and District of Columbia have already instituted in person early voting.) Voters will be able to vote at designated poll sites 10 days prior to election day. Each County Board of Elections will follow the law designating the number of and placement of the early voting poll sites and notify voter of the days, hours, and locations of the early polling sites.

This act will take effect immediately and first apply to the 2019 general election: i.e., early voting will begin Oct. 27, 2019 and go through Nov. 3, 2019. All polls will be open Election Day Nov. 5, 2019.

2. **PRIMARY CONSOLIDATION.** This act combines federal and state primaries into one primary, the fourth Tuesday in June, and amends certain deadlines so NY is in compliance with the federal Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act. This prevents NY from having to go to two primaries for in nonpresidential years and three primaries in presidential years, saving state about \$25,000,000. In addition to cost savings, it should increase voter turnout.

This act will take effect immediately with a June primary date beginning in 2019

3. **SAME DAY VOTER REGISTRATION.** Would allow voters to register and vote on Election Day. In order for this to become law, the NYS Constitution (which requires registration to vote to be completed at least 10 days before Election Day) needs to be amended. Changing the Constitution would require the same bill that passed this year to be also passed in both the Assembly and Senate in the Leg session following the 2020 general election, and then being passed by voters in a referendum in 2021. Therefore, first time this could go into effect would be in 2022.

Currently, New Yorkers need to be registered 25 days before Election Day.

4. **NO- EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING.** Would remove need for a cause for absentee ballot voting. Currently in NY, you can request absentee ballot for six reasons: absence from county on election day; temporary illness or physical disability; permanent illness or physical disability; duties related to primary

care of individual(s) who are ill or disabled; patient or inmate in VA; or detention in jail/prison awaiting trial, action by grand jury or convicted of crime which is not a felony.

Currently 28 states and the District of Columbia allows voters to vote absentee without a cause. No-excuse absentee voting would require a constitutional amendment and could not take place until also passed in both the Assembly and Senate in the Leg session following the 2020 general election, and then being passed by voters in a referendum in 2021sing both houses in 2020 and then passing a referendum in 2021.

5. **PREREGISTRATION FOR 16 AND 17 YEAR OLDS.** Currently the only time 17 year olds can register to vote is if they are turning 18 in that calendar year even if their birthday is after Election Day. This new bill would allow 16 and 17 year olds to preregister. The voter registration form would be modified to include space where there is an explanation of preregistration and allow for form to be pending.

This act would not take effect until January 2020.

6. **STATE-WIDE VOTER REGISTRATION TRANSFER.** Provides that the Board of Elections would transfer the registration and enrollment of a voter appearing on a statewide voter list to wherever they move in the state. This would enable voters who move to a different county in NY to vote on an affidavit ballot even if their new county was not notified of the change of address and have their vote counted. Currently it is up to the voter to reregister in new county to where they move.

This act will take effect 60<sup>th</sup> day after it becomes law.

7. **CLOSURE OF THE LLC LOOPHOLE.** Will change way that candidates can run and fund their campaigns. This will eliminate the loophole which has allowed corporations to pour almost unlimited money into races through limited liability companies. According to this bill, each limited liability company that makes a contribution or expenditure for political purposes will need to file the identity of owners in the limited liability company and the proportion of their interest with the NYS Board of Elections.

This act will take effect on seventh day after it becomes law.