



Let NY Vote: July 2020 Legislative Priorities

Let NY Vote is a nonpartisan, statewide coalition of grassroots networks, civil rights and civil liberties organizations, re-entry communities, good government groups, unions, social service providers, immigrant rights groups, and everyday citizens fighting improve our elections by making registering and voting more accessible and equitable for every eligible New Yorker. While we've seen important gains this legislative session, much like everything else in New York, COVID has upended our elections and our ensuing legislative priorities.

As we've seen, the June primary was like no other. Absentee ballots are still being counted across the state and will more than likely continue to do so for several weeks. With the dramatic expansion of expanded absentee voting and modified in-person voting, it is clear that while local Boards of Elections met the challenges head on with limited resources and ever-changing goalposts, there is a pressing need to immediately codify some of the Governor's Executive Orders and expand on them for November and beyond. It is essential for the Boards of Elections to have as much time as possible and the necessary resources to prepare for the expected turnout of the November election.

It is incredibly important for New Yorkers to have confidence in our elections and that every eligible vote is counted. Therefore we recommend the State Legislature immediately pass legislation that addresses the following:

- **Keep & improve upon expanded absentee voting provisions for the November election.**
 - **Codify the expansion of expanded absentee voting for the duration of the public health crisis** (either of these bills are acceptable)
 - [SS8015B](#) (Biaggi)/[A10217A](#) (Blake): public health pathway. We recommend that the bill be amended to provide certainty that it applies to the upcoming November general election.
 - [A10169A](#) (Dinowitz)/no same as: COVID specific pathway
 - **Ensure every properly cast absentee ballot is counted**
 - [S8368](#) (Myrie)/A10744(Paulin): protects ballots where voters intent is unambiguous
 - [S8369](#) (Myrie)/A10746(Paulin): deals with methods for sealing absentee ballots
 - [S8370](#) (Myrie)/no same as: allows for absentee ballot curing process due to observer challenge
 - [S8367](#) (Myrie)/no same as: deals with absentee ballot postmarking issues. We recommend that the bill be amended to require the Boards of



Elections to use the USPS Full Service Intelligent Mail, which allows tracking of the absentee ballots through the postal service. Use of intelligent Mail would eliminate the possibility that a late-mailed ballot would be counted.

- **Provide a return postage guaranteed envelope with absentee ballots.**
 - [S8004](#) (Sanders)/[A2327](#) (May)
- **Temporarily enable the use of an online voter registration portal in New York City.**
 - ([S6463](#)/[A8473](#)) The pandemic has caused a worrisome, precipitous drop in voter registration across the state and in New York City. This bill would allow the temporary use of the New York City Campaign Finance Board's online portal and would sunset as soon as the New York State Board of Elections online voter registration portal goes live in/by 2022.

We urge the Assembly to pass the following bills passed by the Senate:

- S7194 (Benjamin)/A8998(Dinowitz) provides students with voter information and application for voter registration
- S6922(Kaplan)/A9791(Lavine) increases minimum number of early voting sites to 10

We remain confident that the New York State Legislature will move quickly to pass these bills during the July session to secure our elections for the duration of the public health crisis. These COVID-19 related priorities are in addition to our priorities identified at the beginning of this year's legislative session.