



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 310

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to amend the State Election Law to extend the right to vote to individuals who are currently serving parole.

By Council Members Foster, Barron, Boyland, Clarke, Comrie, Gerson, Perkins, Reed, Rivera, Sanders, Seabrook, Serrano, Stewart and Vann

Whereas, Pursuant to New York State Election Law, no person who has been convicted of a felony pursuant to the laws of New York State shall have the right to register to vote at any election unless s/he shall have been pardoned or restored the rights of citizenship by the governor, his/her maximum sentence of imprisonment has expired, or s/he has been discharged from parole; and

Whereas, Similarly, no person who has been convicted in another state for a crime or offense which would constitute a felony under the laws of New York State shall have the right to register to vote at any election unless pardoned or restored the rights of citizenship by the appropriate governor, his/her maximum sentence of imprisonment has expired, or s/he has been discharged from parole; and

Whereas, Furthermore, no person convicted in federal court of a felony, or a crime or offense which would constitute a felony under the laws of New York State, shall have the right to register to vote at any election unless pardoned or restored the rights of citizenship by the President, his/her maximum sentence of imprisonment has expired, or s/he has been discharged from parole; and

Whereas, A significant number of New Yorkers are disenfranchised because they have been convicted of a felony and are currently serving parole; and

Whereas, Parolees have been entrusted to re-enter society, and therefore should be eligible to participate in the most fundamental rights of citizenry, the right to vote and elect their governmental representatives; and

Whereas, By denying the right to vote, the government ostracizes parolees, thus preventing these individuals from fully reintegrating into society; and

Whereas, Allowing parolees to participate in the election process can restore a certain level of dignity and go a long way toward helping these individuals, who have been deemed fit to re-enter society, to become productive members of their communities; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to amend the State Election Law to extend the right to vote to individuals who are currently serving parole.

LS # 662

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