



Legislation Details (With Text)

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**Title:** Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass legislation that would bring early voting to the state.

**Sponsors:** Diana Reyna, Fernando Cabrera, Daniel Dromm, Brad S. Lander, Darlene Mealy, Deborah L. Rose, Jumaane D. Williams, Ydanis A. Rodriguez, Michael C. Nelson, Daniel R. Garodnick, Eric A. Ulrich

**Indexes:**

**Attachments:**

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Res. No. 652

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass legislation that would bring early voting to the state.

By Council Members Reyna, Cabrera, Dromm, Lander, Mealy, Rose, Williams, Rodriguez, Nelson, Garodnick and Ulrich

Whereas, According to American University’s Center for the Study of the American Electorate, only 7.46 percent of eligible New Yorkers voted in the 2010 Primary Election; and

Whereas, New York State’s turnout did not substantially improve in the subsequent 2010 General Election, when its turnout was ranked lowest among all fifty states; and

Whereas, Some have attributed New York’s low voter turnout to the state’s lack of an early voting option; and

Whereas, Thirty-one states currently offer voters the option of no-excuse, in-person voting before Election Day; and

Whereas, In New York, a voter must visit his or her assigned polling location between 6 A.M. and 9

P.M. on Election Day in order to cast a vote; and

Whereas, A voter may only vote prior to Election Day in New York if he or she votes via absentee ballot and, even then, only if he or she articulates an acceptable reason for being unable to physically visit a polling site on Election Day; and

Whereas, In the 2008 presidential election, over 30 percent of the votes cast nationally were done so via early voting; and

Whereas, In that same election, only five percent of New Yorkers voted via absentee ballot; and

Whereas, New Yorkers cite their busy schedules as a primary reason for failing to vote on election day; and

Whereas, Allowing voters more than a single day to vote would accommodate those who are otherwise be too busy or physically unable to vote on Election Day; and

Whereas, A 15-hour window of opportunity in which to vote can result in disenfranchisement when there are unintended delays, as was the case in New York City during the 2010 Primary Election when numerous polling locations were plagued by late openings, broken voting machines and long lines; and

Whereas, A recent study published by the University of Wisconsin-Madison found that when combined with same-day registration, early voting has a significant and positive effect on voter turnout; and

Whereas, If passed, A.293 (Lancman) would address the need for early voting by enabling registered voters to vote up to fourteen business days in advance of any primary, general or special election; and

Whereas, A.293, also known as the Early Voting Act, would bring New York State in line with nearly two-thirds of the country and contribute to more representative elections in the future; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass legislation that would bring early voting to the state.