



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 594

By Council Members Gioia, Addabbo, Barron, Brewer, Clarke, Comrie, Foster, Gentile, Gerson, Gonzalez, Jackson, Jennings, Koppell, Liu, Lopez, Monserrate, Reyna, Rivera, Sanders, Seabrook, Stewart, Vann, Weprin and Moskowitz

A Local Law to To amend the New York city charter, in relation to requiring that the department of education of the city of New York provide voter registration forms to students.

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Legislative findings. Voting is a central tenet of democracy. The vitality of the democratic process depends on voter participation in elections. Yet, far too few New Yorkers vote in local, state or national elections. In part, this is because voters find it difficult to register to vote. Although both city and state laws provide mechanisms for distributing voter registration forms by city and state agencies as part of agency-based voter registration programs, the New York City Department of Education does not participate in such programs. The Council finds that the Department of Education is uniquely positioned in the City to enhance the participation of young people in the democratic process by distributing voter registration forms to potential young voters.

§ 2. Section 1057-a of chapter 46 of the New York city charter is hereby amended to add a new subdivision 8 to read as follows:

8. a. The department of education of the city of New York shall provide a postage paid board of elections of the city of New York voter registration form to each graduating student who receives a high school diploma, including but not limited to a Regents, local, general equivalency or Individualized Education Program diploma. Such voter registration form shall be printed in English. The department shall deliver such voter registration form to each graduating student at the same time and, to the greatest extent practicable, in the same manner as it delivers diplomas to each such student, such as by placing a voter registration form in the envelope containing the student's diploma or by handing a voter registration form to each student during a graduation ceremony.

b. The department of education of the city of New York shall ensure that postage paid board of elections voter registration forms are available in the main or central office of each high school under the jurisdiction of the department for students who wish to obtain one. The department shall also ensure that each such high school provides adequate notice to its students of the availability of such forms in its main or central office.

c. The department shall request from the board of elections of the city of New York a sufficient quantity of voter

registration forms to meet the requirements of this subdivision.

§ 3. If any subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or other portion of this local law is, for any reason, declared unconstitutional or invalid, in whole or in part, by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed severable and such unconstitutionality or invalidity shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the local law that added this section, which remaining portions shall remain in full force and effect.

§ 4. This local law shall take effect thirty days after its enactment into law.

MHG
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