



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 261-A

By Council Members Gioia, Moskowitz, Addabbo, Barron, Brewer, Clarke, Comrie, Foster, Gentile, Gerson, Gonzalez, Jackson, Jennings, Koppell, Liu, Lopez, Monserrate, Reyna, Rivera, Sanders, Seabrook, Stewart, Vann, Weprin, Boyland, Gennaro, James, Katz, McMahon, Quinn, Recchia, Reed, Serrano, Martinez, Palma, Yassky and The Speaker (Council Member Miller)

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

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Legislative findings. The Council of the city of New York affirms that 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, and voter participation has been declining. The Council finds that affirmative steps are necessary to encourage and increase voter participation in all elections.

The Council further finds that this decline and lack of participation is due, in part, to the fact that 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 Section 3-209 of the administrative code of the city of New York is hereby REPEALED and RE-ENACTED as follows:

§ 3-209 a. Short title. This section shall be known and may be cited as the “Young Adult Voter Registration Act.”

b. Registration of voters. Each public or private high school within the city shall make available during the school year to seniors such materials as may be published by the board of elections relating to voter registration and, where appropriate, shall provide applications for registration and enrollment, and may assist in the execution of such applications.

c. Registration of graduating seniors. 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. The department shall deliver such voter registration form to each graduating student at the same time and in the same manner as it delivers diplomas

to each such student.

d. Forms to be available at school. 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.

e. Sufficient quantity of forms. 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. Section 3-210 of the administrative code of the city of New York is hereby REPEALED.

§ 4. Section 3.210.1 of the administrative code of the city of New York is hereby renumbered as section 3-210.

§ 5. 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.

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

MHG
June 15, 2004
LS # 3112