



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1829

Resolution urging the New York State Assembly to reintroduce and pass A.1552, which would prohibit the use of voter registration rolls to select juries in New York State.

By Council Members Felder, Comrie, James and Nelson

Whereas, Many jurisdictions select jurors for state and local trials solely from voter registration lists, and many more choose jurors in part from such lists; and

Whereas, According to the report, “*Deterring voter registration through juror selection practices: Evidence from survey data*” by Stephen Knack, who is the Lead Economist in the World Bank's Research Department and Public Sector Governance Department, the use of voter registration lists for jury selection purposes significantly reduces registration rates; and

Whereas, The lack of compensation for working men and women for their lost time at work creates a poll tax, which discourages citizens to register to vote; and

Whereas, According to a survey in Stephen Knack's report, a large percentage of Americans are aware that voter registration lists are the primary source lists for selection of jurors; and

Whereas, Between 1976 and 1988, states adopting the use of voter registration lists for juror selection experienced declines in registration rates; and

Whereas, Residing in a jurisdiction selecting jurors from registration lists reduced the probability of being registered to vote in the 1988 election by about nine percentage points; and

Whereas, A.1552 would exclude voter registration lists from the sources of names for prospective jurors to be selected at random by commissioners of jurors; and

Whereas, A.1552 would still allow for many other sources to be used, such as local tax lists and licensed

drivers; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the New York State Assembly to reintroduce and pass A.1552, which would prohibit the use of voter registration rolls to select juries in New York State.

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