



## Legislation Text

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### Proposed Res. No. 228-A

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.660/A.274, an act to amend the election law in relation to the qualification of voters; and to amend the election law in relation to civic education and student voter registration.

By Council Members Brewer and Hanif

Whereas, The right to vote is essential to a well-functioning democracy; and

Whereas, The New York State Constitution sets the minimum voting age at eighteen; and

Whereas, Sixteen year-olds shoulder many of the same responsibilities as adults; and

Whereas, In New York, sixteen year-olds can work and pay taxes; and

Whereas, According to an article in the George Washington Law Review, studies have shown that by the time an individual reaches the age of sixteen they have developed the cognitive abilities required to engage in the reasoned decision making that is necessary for voting; and

Whereas, Without the right to vote sixteen year-olds lack a voice in government decisions that affect their lives, such as who oversees their schools and how their tax dollars are spent; and

Whereas, S.2562, introduced by Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal and pending in the New York State Senate, and its companion bill A.330 introduced by Assembly Member Robert Carroll and pending in the New York State Assembly would amend the New York State Constitution to lower the minimum voting age to sixteen for state and local elections; and

Whereas, S.660, introduced by Senator Brad-Hoylman-Sigal and pending in the New York State Senate and its companion bill, A.274 introduced by Assembly Member Robert Carrol and pending in the New York State Assembly, amends the New York State election law to conform with the Constitutional changes made by

S.2562/A.330; and

Whereas, S.660/A.274 amends the New York State election law to allow sixteen year-olds to vote in state and local elections; and

Whereas, New York election law requires citizens to register prior to voting; and

Whereas, S. 660/A.274 amends the New York State election law to allow anyone who turns sixteen years old by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the calendar year to register to vote in state and local elections; and

Whereas, S.660/A.274 would mandate that high schools in New York State provide all students turning sixteen years old within the calendar year with both a voter registration form and a voter registration opt-out form; and

Whereas, S.660/A.274 would require that students be afforded classroom time to fill out either a voter registration form or a voter registration opt-out form; and

Whereas, According to a report by the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, students who receive a high-quality civics education are more likely to vote, discuss policy issues with their friends and family and volunteer in their communities; and

Whereas, Civic education can help young people develop the knowledge and habits needed to actively participate in civic affairs; and

Whereas, S.660/A.274 would require that students in the 9<sup>th</sup> through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade receive a minimum of eight class periods worth of civics education; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign S.660/A.274, an act to amend the election law in relation to the qualification of voters; and to amend the election law in relation to civic education and student voter registration

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