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Res. No. 603

Resolution calling on Congress to pass, and the President to sign, S.1/H.R.11, the Freedom to Vote Act.

By Council Members Williams, Stevens, Riley, Ossé Cabán, Louis, Won, Brooks-Powers, Rivera, Banks, Hanif, Nurse, Schulman and Hudson

Whereas, Voting is the most fundamental right Americans have; and

Whereas, In the United States, elections are administered by state and local governments; and

Whereas, Elections in New York City are administered by the New York City Board of Elections; and

Whereas, H.R.11, the Freedom to Vote Act, introduced by Representative John Sarbanes and pending in the United States House of Representatives and its companion bill S.1 introduced by Senator Amy Klobuchar, and pending in the United States Senate, would set baseline national standards for federal elections; and

Whereas, The Freedom to Vote Act would require all states to allow same-day voter registration; and

Whereas, New York requires voters to register at least ten days before Election Day; and

Whereas, This means that New York voters may only register and vote on the same day on the first day of early voting; and

Whereas, The Freedom to Vote Act would require that every state have at least 14 days of early voting, including weekends; and

Whereas, New York currently only has nine days of early voting, including two weekends; and

Whereas, The Freedom to Vote Act would make Election Day a federal holiday; and

Whereas, The Freedom to Vote Act would require states to ensure that no voter waits longer than 30 minutes to vote; and

Whereas, Numerous publications including Slate and WNYC reported that some New York City voters

waited up to four hours to vote in the 2020 general election; and

Whereas, The Freedom to Vote Act would require states to offer no-excuse absentee voting; and

Whereas, The Freedom to Vote Act would clarify and expand the circumstances in which New Yorkers could request an absentee ballot without having to provide an excuse; and

Whereas, The Freedom to Vote Act would require states to offer accessible and secure ballot drop boxes; and

Whereas, New York does not currently offer ballot drop boxes outside of election day and early voting sites; and

Whereas, The Freedom to Vote Act would prohibit unfair voter list maintenance; and

Whereas, According to Gothamist, the New York City Board of Elections admitted to illegally removing more than 117,000 Brooklyn voters from the voting rolls in 2016; and

Whereas, The Freedom to Vote Act would create fairer congressional re-districting; and

Whereas, The Freedom to Vote Act would create a federal small-donor matching program; and

Whereas, The New York City and State small donor matching funds programs only apply to city and state candidates, and not to federal office-seekers; and

Whereas, The Freedom to Vote Act would require that secret money organizations disclose their donors; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on Congress to pass, and the President to sign, S.1/H.R.11, the Freedom to Vote Act.

LS #17533
10/01/24
EHC