



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 146

Resolution urging the New York State Legislature to amend the Constitution of the State of New York to allow same day voter registration.

By Council Members Brewer, Chin, Dickens, Dromm, James, Lander, Mark-Viverito, Nelson, Palma, Reyna, Rodriguez, Rose, Williams and Garodnick

Whereas, Article II section 5 of the Constitution of the State of New York states that in order to vote in an upcoming election, a resident is required to register to vote at least ten days before that election day; and

Whereas, This restriction disenfranchises certain residents, who, for example, may have recently moved to a new election district or students who are away at college; and

Whereas, To encourage more people to vote on Election Day and to make the democratic process more inclusive, New York State should allow voters to register on the same day as Election Day; and

Whereas, Same day registration, also known as “Election Day Registration,” is currently practiced in Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Wyoming; and

Whereas, Requiring registration ten days before an election is an unnecessary barrier preventing citizens from participating in the democratic process; and

Whereas, Many unregistered but eligible voters often do not focus on election campaigns until the voter registration deadline has passed; and

Whereas, Allowing eligible voters to register to vote at any time up to and including Election Day is a sensible way to increase voter turnout; and

Whereas, According to a study conducted by the think tank Demos, “Voters Win With Election Day Registration: A Snapshot of Election 2006,” states with Election Day Registration generally have an average

voter turnout that is 10 to 12 percentage points higher than non-Election Day Registration states; and

Whereas, Election Day Registration must be implemented in a way that encourages greater participation in the democratic process while also maintaining efficient and secure elections; and

Whereas, Election Day Registration would likely increase the turnout of lower-income and younger voters, ensuring that elections are more inclusive and that election results are more representative of each community; now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the New York State Legislature to amend the Constitution of the State of New York to allow same day voter registration.

JG
LS# 473
2/24/2010