



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

A Statement from Senator Pam Helming On Senate's Passing Package of Election Reforms

SENATOR PAM HELMING January 17, 2019

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“Today, the New York City-led Senate voted to enact a number of extreme proposals that will change the way elections are held in our state and leave taxpayers footing the bill. I support voter reforms that provide opportunities to increase voter turnout and improve access to democracy. Unfortunately, while some of the titles of the bills passed today may sound good, the reality is these bills are loaded with negative consequences. Some of the most concerning issues are the costs to our local governments and the fact that there is no evidence to suggest this legislation will actually increase turnout. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), Nevada’s change to early voting actually caused their citizens to participate less. In fact, in 2016, voter turnout there was 3 percent lower than the national average. The Boston Globe reported that Massachusetts found early voting has either had no impact or resulted in decreased participation.”

“On the issue of cost, in 2018, the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) estimated each county would be burdened with a new \$1 million unfunded mandate. However, last year the Governor only included \$7 million in funding for this in his budget. This legislation was passed without understanding the fiscal impact and the burden it will place on our counties and local taxpayers. This is not responsible leadership and will not stem the flow of people leaving New York State.”

“These reforms could also increase the likelihood of voter fraud. This is something everyone should be concerned about, regardless of their politics. That is why we need voter ID laws to prevent political campaigns and partisan organizations from abusing same-day voter registration and harvesting ballots.”

“Instead of making kneejerk legislative changes this session, we should be working with our election commissioners to develop common sense policies that enhance voter access and protect the integrity of our electoral system.”