



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

Metzger Introduces Automatic Vote-By-Mail Legislation in the Wake of COVID-19 State of Emergency

JEN METZGER March 24, 2020

| ISSUE: **AUTOMATIC VOTE BY MAIL, ELECTIONS, COVID-19**



Albany, NY...In the face of the COVID-19 outbreak, Senator Jen Metzger (SD-42) has introduced a bill ([S8120](#)) requiring the Board of Elections to create a plan for the use of a vote-by-mail election system during a time of emergency, allowing New Yorkers to cast their June 2020 ballots by mail should the public health crisis continue.

Metzger's bill calls attention to the cumbersome nature of the state's current [absentee ballot system](#), in which voters must first apply to the Board of Elections in order to receive a ballot

in the mail. By contrast, in a vote-by-mail system, all eligible voters automatically receive a ballot in the mail without procedural hurdles, and vote by mailing their ballot to the Board of Elections, depositing their ballot at designated locations, or, as applicable, by voting at a polling center. A vote-by-mail system is currently used in Colorado, Oregon, and Washington for all elections.

"It is just common sense to prepare now if the current public health emergency extends to the June primary and beyond," **said Senator Jen Metzger.** "We need to make sure we have a backup plan in place that protects the health and safety of election workers and voters without sacrificing participation in these important elections."

Metzger's bill would require the Board of Elections to have a vote-by-mail plan in place by May 1, 2020, to allow sufficient time for implementation in the June 2020 primaries.