



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Alessandra Biaggi

## Governor Cuomo Signs Senator Biaggi's Bill to Codify Access to Absentee Ballot Voting Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

ALESSANDRA BIAGGI August 20, 2020

**ALBANY, NY** – Today, August 20, 2020, Governor Cuomo signed S8015D, sponsored by State Senator Alessandra Biaggi, to expand access to absentee ballot voting amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The bill redefines the term "illness" to include instances where a voter is unable to appear personally at the polling place of the election district in which they are a qualified voter because there is a risk of contracting or spreading a disease that may cause illness to the voter or to other members of the public. The bill shall take effect immediately upon signature, and shall expire and be deemed repealed on January 1st, 2022.

**State Senator Alessandra Biaggi (D-Bronx/Westchester) issued the following statement:**

"COVID has upended every aspect of our lives — but we cannot allow it to undermine our democracy and New Yorkers' sacred right to vote. I introduced S8015D in March to ensure no New Yorker would have to choose between their health and fulfilling their civic responsibility. Unfortunately, during the June election, too many New Yorkers had to make that very choice. With changing guidance, and little time to prepare, voters faced uncertainty and in many cases received their ballots late, or not at all. Signed into law, my bill will give every New Yorker clarity and the assurance that they can vote by absentee ballot come November. It will also provide the Board of Elections with much needed time to prepare. I want to extend my gratitude to Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and my

colleagues in the Legislature for their partnership and commitment to protecting our democracy.”