



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rachel May

Senator Rachel May Participates in Joint Legislative Hearing on Elections during a Pandemic

RACHEL MAY August 12, 2020

| ISSUE: **ELECTIONS IN A PANDEMIC: A REVIEW OF THE 2020 PRIMARIES**



Syracuse, NY - Yesterday, Senator Rachel May (D-Onondaga, Madison, Oneida) participated in a joint legislative hearing on the impacts COVID-19 has had on our elections and how we can better prepare for the November election.

Nearly two dozen election officials, voter-access groups, and advocacy groups testified on the impact the coronavirus had on the June primary elections. They detailed the challenges local

boards of elections experienced mailing absentee ballot applications, processing applications, mailing ballots, and processing ballots. Thousands of absentee ballots across the state were thrown out for technical issues like a missing signature or a delayed return of the ballot, some voters didn't receive their ballot until after the election.

There were many recommendations to improve the November election process; the most crucial was adequate funding for staff, outreach/education, and equipment. One method to prevent ballots from being thrown out due to a lack of a postmark is to invest in ballot dropboxes. Senator May is the co-prime sponsor of a bill ([S.8902](#)) that will allow for contactless ballot drop-offs for absentee ballots.

“We have made great strides during the 2019-2020 legislative session to improve New York’s voting laws,” **said Senator May**. “Now, the current public health crisis has changed the way we have to run our elections. Our elections officials performed admirably under highly difficult circumstances during the June primary, and we must work together to address new challenges that the pandemic has presented. I appreciate all of the elections officials and experts who testified on steps we must take to guarantee safe access to the ballot this November.”

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