



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Alessandra Biaggi

SENATOR BIAGGI AND SENATE MAJORITY PASS LEGISLATION TO PROTECT ELECTION INTEGRITY AGAINST ONGOING PANDEMIC

ALESSANDRA BIAGGI January 27, 2021

BRONX, NY – State Senator Alessandra Biaggi, together with the Senate Majority, advanced election system reforms to protect New Yorkers’ health and our state’s democratic process ahead of the 2021 elections despite the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. The bills passed by the Senate Majority build on the major legislation passed earlier **this month**, and the historic reforms enacted during the **2019** and **2020** Legislative Session. The legislative package includes expanded access to absentee ballots, lower petition requirements for the 2021 elections, remote participation for political party designation conferences, and protections for nursing and long-term care facility residents.

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

“In the wake of the pandemic, it is critical that we continue to take every action necessary to protect the integrity and accessibility of our elections, while prioritizing the safety of voters. The moment we are in requires us to swiftly adapt, and I am proud to work alongside my colleagues in the New York State Senate to continue our efforts to transform our electoral system, and eliminate as many barriers to participation as possible.”

The bills co-sponsored and advanced by Senator Biaggi and the Senate Majority include:

- **Protect New Yorkers' Health by Expanding Access to Absentee Ballots:** This legislation, Senate Bill [S.1632](#) sponsored by Senator Shelley Mayer, will allow voters to request an absentee ballot for upcoming village elections if they are concerned about contracting or spreading a disease that may cause illness to the voter or to other members of the public.
- **Reduce Petition Numbers to Help Protect Public Health:** This legislation, Senate Bill [S.2733](#) sponsored by Senator Rachel May, will reduce the number of signatures for designating and nominating petitions to thirty percent of the number required by law.
- **Enable Remote Participation for Political Party Designations:** This legislation, Senate Bill [S.1705A](#) sponsored by Senator Michelle Hinchey, will enable political parties to use video or telephone conferencing to conduct party designations and nominations for village, town, and political party elections.
- **Protect Nursing and Long-Term Care Facility Residents' Health while Guaranteeing Access to Absentee Ballots:** This legislation, Senate Bill [S.1644](#) sponsored by Senator Jeremy Cooney, will ensure that absentee ballots can be delivered to New York nursing homes and long-term care facilities without Board of Elections inspectors having to physically enter the premises. This will help avoid accidental exposure to COVID-19 for residents of these facilities.

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