



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy A. Cooney

Senator Cooney Protects Vulnerable Senior Voters Passes His First Bill

JEREMY A. COONEY January 26, 2021

| ISSUE: **ELECTIONS, VOTING RIGHTS, ABSENTEE VOTING, NURSING HOMES**

(ALBANY/ROCHESTER, NY) NYS Senator Jeremy Cooney (Rochester-District 56) passed his first bill in the Senate today. Senate Bill 1644, relating to **absentee voting by residents of nursing homes** and other long-term care facilities, passed the State Senate by a vote of 62-1. This bill ensures that nursing home and long-term care facility residents can receive absentee ballots by mail. Prior to this legislation, elections inspectors were required to physically enter the facilities and hand deliver ballots to residents. These changes will help protect senior populations that are among the most at-risk during the COVID-19 pandemic while at the same time upholding the sanctity of our elections.

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“My mother was in a nursing home and she still wanted to vote, this bill protects that sacred right,” Senator Cooney said. “My first piece of legislation ensures that residents of nursing homes won’t have to choose between being heard in our democracy and risking their health. I am honored my Senate colleagues overwhelmingly supported this legislation.”

"We continue to adjust to new requirements providing voters with safe and legitimate ways to cast their votes. Senator Cooney's bill provides clarity to Boards of Elections on ensuring that voters, in one of our most vulnerable populations, have a more efficient method of no contact voting," said Democratic **Monroe County Board of Elections Commissioner Jackie Ortiz**.

"It is important that we offer those who reside in long-term care facilities safe and accessible opportunities to take part in the democratic process and cast their vote," said **Loren Ranaletta, President/CEO of Episcopal SeniorLife Communities**. "This bill does that by eliminating possible barriers to the casting of absentee ballots. We thank Senator Cooney for carrying this legislation and shedding light on this issue."

"While I am pleased this bill passed, our work of protecting our most vulnerable New Yorkers must always be on our minds. I remain committed to passing laws that further safeguard our democracy and increase voter access," Senator Cooney concluded.

RELATED LEGISLATION

2021-S1644

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Relates to absentee voting by residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities

January 14, 2021

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Jeremy A. Cooney**

Do you support this bill?