



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Zellnor Myrie

Governor Signs Myrie "Wrong Church" Ballot Bill Into Law

ZELLNOR MYRIE December 6, 2022



BROOKLYN— Governor Kathy Hochul today signed legislation to prevent a form of voter suppression, known as the **"Wrong Church"** problem, into law. This legislation, written and sponsored by **Senator Zellnor Y. Myrie (D-Central Brooklyn)**, would require the counting of affidavit ballots cast by qualified voters who attempt to cast their vote at the incorrect polling place, within the correct county.

"Our laws should treat New Yorkers' votes as sacred, and wherever possible should ensure qualified ballots are counted," **said Senator Myrie, Chair of the Senate Elections Committee.** "This

new law will ensure eligible voters will not have their valid votes disqualified simply because they appeared at the incorrect polling place. I'm grateful to Governor Hochul, Assembly Member Robert Carroll and the many voting rights advocates who fought to codify this change in our election laws."

Previously, voters who appeared at an incorrect polling place were often directed to complete an affidavit ballot, which is then fully disqualified even if the voter is eligible to vote in one or more contests on the ballot. Over 13,000 otherwise-valid affidavit ballots were fully disqualified in the 2020 general election for this reason- a problem that disproportionately impacts majority-minority communities. **This new law would ensure these voters' ballots would be counted for all contests in which they are eligible to vote, as long as they appear at a polling place within their correct county.**

This year over 86,000 voters in New York City alone had their polling place changed between the June and August primaries. One of the top complaints heard from voters during Senator Myrie's 2021 election reform hearings was insufficient communication about polling place changes, leading many voters to appear at the incorrect polling place on Election Day. These disqualifications disproportionately affect voters in New York City.

"While other states around the country continue to find new ways of restricting suppressing votes, I am proud New York is finding fewer reasons to disqualify valid ballots," **concluded Senator Myrie.** "This new law is yet another example of New York's journey from #WorstToFirst, as we lead the way toward a more inclusive, accessible and fair representative democracy."

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RELATED LEGISLATION

2021-S284C

- 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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Requires counting affidavit ballots of eligible voters if a voter appears at a polling place in the correct county but in the incorrect election district

December 24, 2020

Passed Assembly

Sponsored by Zellnor Myrie

Do you support this bill?
