



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris, Assembly Member Reyes Introduce New Early Vote By Mail Legislation, Giving New Yorkers Another Option To Easily Vote Early

MICHAEL GIANARIS May 30, 2023

| ISSUE: **VOTE BY MAIL, VOTE EARLY, ELECTION REFORM, VOTE EARLY BY MAIL, ELECTIONS**



ALBANY, N.Y. – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris and Assembly Member Karines Reyes announced [new legislation \(S.7394/A.7632\)](#) today to expand early voting options to include an Early Vote by Mail choice for all New Yorkers.

“Voting is a fundamental right and the easier we make it to vote, the healthier our democracy will

be,” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “I am proud the State Senate continues to build on its important work of expanding access to the ballot box for all New Yorkers.”

“As voting rights continually come under in state legislatures across the state, our state can take a bold step in protecting the rights of New Yorkers seeking to access the ballot box,” said **Assembly Member Karines Reyes, R.N.** “I am pleased to sponsor the New York Early Mail Voter Act with State Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris to ease the burdens that voters face and increase voter participation in our democracy.”

The bill would give all New Yorkers the option of Early Voting by mail. While the state constitution requires a prescribed excuse for Election Day absentee voting, it does not constrain the Legislature from enacting a unique process for Early Voting. Similar proposals have been enacted and survived challenges in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.

New Yorkers would request an Early Voting ballot from their local Board of Elections and it would need to be returned before the close of polls on Election Day.

**Daniella Ballou-Aares, CEO & Co-Founder of the Leadership Now Project** said, “Having the option to vote by mail is vital for busy New Yorkers, and a crucial modernization that 35 states have already adopted. Leadership Now looks forward to working to support speedy passage of this important measure.”

**Sam Oliker-Friedland, executive director of the Institute for Responsive Government** said, “Senator Gianaris has introduced a bill that will make no-excuse absentee voting available to millions of New Yorkers, a move that gives voters secure options in how to cast their ballots, and catches New York up to neighboring states. Some 35 states already offer no-excuse vote by mail options, and I’m glad to see that now New York is on the path to joining them.”

**Al Vincent Jr, Executive Director of Actors’ Equity Association** said, “This common-sense bill will make voting more accessible for many arts workers, especially the thousands of Equity members who travel around the country for their work, either on tour or for sit-down productions outside of New York State. We are grateful that Senator Gianaris is making civic participation a priority in New York State.”

**Theo Oshiro, Co-Executive Director of Make the Road New York** said, “Voters across New York deserve to have their voices heard, and they deserve the easiest possible voting experience. We strongly support efforts to permanently give every voter the option to vote by

mail. It's been a strong success during the pandemic, helping boost participation levels in our communities, and it should be a permanent feature of our election system."

**Julie Samuels, President & Executive Director of Tech:NYC** said, "No-excuse vote by mail is a win-win — it not only increases voter participation by making it easier for those with work or family obligations to vote, but it also eases the burden on election officials by reducing the demand on Election Day. We are thrilled to support Senator Gianaris' efforts to ensure New York joins the majority of states already incorporating no-excuse absentee voting."

**Christina Harvey, Executive Director of Stand Up America** said, "In recent years, New York has become a leader in voting rights and accessibility, and Senator Gianaris' bill continues that legacy. By creating a permanent universal mail-in voting system, more New Yorkers will be able to make their voices heard in our elections, whether they are hardworking people who may not have enough hours in the day to get to the polls, seniors who can't vote in person, or someone who prefers to fill out their ballot at their own pace in the privacy of their home. We're grateful to Senator Gianaris for his leadership and look forward to mobilizing our nearly 30,000 members in New York to help pass this critical bill."