



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1900-2013, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1900

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign into law legislation that would increase youth engagement in elections by allowing 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections if they turn 18 by the time of the general election, and by allowing 16-year-olds to pre-register to vote.

By Council Members Mark-Viverito, Barron, James, Mendez, Palma, Richards, Rose, Vann and Rodriguez

Whereas, According to a study by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University, in the 2012 General Elections youth voter turnout was 15 percent lower than the population as a whole; and

Whereas, Low youth engagement in the political process can result in public policies that adversely affect younger people at precisely the time when they may need the most help in starting their careers and their families; and

Whereas, Two ways that could increase youth engagement in elections would be to allow 17-year-olds to vote in party primaries if they will be 18-years-old by the time the general election takes place, and to allow 16- year-olds to pre-register to vote; and

Whereas, Allowing 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections increases the likelihood that they will vote in the general election because they will have participated in electing the candidates who are on the ballot in the general election; and

Whereas, According to Center for Voting and Democracy, studies show that voters who begin voting young or who have voted before are more likely to vote in the future; and

Whereas, Twenty states have already adopted laws allowing 17-year-olds to vote in primaries if they are 18 by the general election; and

Whereas, Similarly getting young people to pre-register to vote increases the number of voters who will ultimately be registered, which is likely to increase overall turnout; and

Whereas, In April of this year Governor Cuomo proposed an election reform that would allow 16-year-olds to pre-register to vote at their schools or the Department of Motor Vehicles which would result in them being automatically registered once they turn 18-years-old; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign into law legislation that would increase youth engagement in elections by allowing 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections if they turn 18 by the time of the general election, and by allowing 16-year-olds to pre-register to vote.

AM
LS4724
7/9/13