



MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF S2951A (KAVANAGH)/A8858A (CARROLL)

TO: New York State Assembly and Senate

DATE: May 31, 2022

RE: An act to reduce the time for mailing and receipt of registration applications to the Constitutional minimum of 10 days.

Our groups urge your support for S2951A/A8858A which would reduce the time for mailing and receipt of voter registration applications to the Constitutional minimum of 10 days. Thirty-one states have a voter registration timeline of under 25 days, 18 of which offer same day voter registration. Meanwhile New York State continues to adhere to an outdated timeline of 25 days. Reducing the voter registration timeline to 10 days would increase voter turnout, reduce a barrier to voting for all, and increase participation in democracy. **It is important that this bill is brought to the floor for a vote this legislative session.**

In the past few years, New York State has made progress on voting rights initiatives. However, barriers to voter registration still stand in the way, especially for voters of color, and racial gaps in registration rates exacerbate underlying racial turnout gaps.¹ Reducing the voter registration timeline to the constitutional minimum of ten days would enable more people to get out to the polls and could expand equity within our systems.

The large number of states that are able to smoothly run a shorter registration timeline, or even same-day registration, show that the ten-day deadline is easily administrable. Moreover, online voter

¹ Minnis, T. A., & Shah, N. (2020). Voter Registration in Today's Democracy: Barriers and Opportunities [Review of *Voter Registration in Today's Democracy: Barriers and Opportunities*]. *American Bar Association: Civil Rights and Social Justice*, 45(1). https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/voting-rights/-use-it-or-lose-it---the-problem-of-purges-from-the-registration/

registration and automatic voter registration will go into effect in 2023, which will substantially reduce the burden of late registrations.

There is no reason New York State needs a voter registration time frame longer than the Constitutionally mandated 10 days. Reducing the timeline reduces barriers to voting, encourages more people to vote, and enfranchises voters. It is essential that this bill be passed to facilitate increased participation in democracy.

For the above reasons, our groups urge your support of S2951A(Kavanagh)/A8858A(Carroll).

Jarrett Berg, Co-Founder and Voting Rights Counsel
Vote Early New York

Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director
League of Women Voters of New York State

Elizabeth Kocienda, Director of Advocacy
New York City Bar Association

Jan Combopiano, Executive Committee Member
Brooklyn Voters Alliance

Edward Cuesta, Executive Director
Dominicanos USA (DUSA)

Lurie Daniel Favors, Esq., Executive Director
Center for Law and Social Justice at Medgar Evers College

Blair Horner, Executive Director
New York Public Interest Research Group

John Kaehny, Executive Director
Reinvent Albany

Susan Lerner, Executive Director
Common Cause New York

Let New York Vote Coalition

Sean Morales-Doyle, Acting Director, Voting Rights Program
Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law

Betsy Gotbaum, Executive Director
Citizens Union