



November 20, 2023

Updated: November 21, 2023

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
Executive Chamber
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

RE: MEMBERS OF LET NY VOTE COALITION URGE GOVERNOR HOCHUL TO SIGN S3505B/A4282B INTO LAW, MOVING SOME ELECTIONS TO EVEN YEARS

Dear Governor Hochul,

We, member organizations and partners of the Let NY Vote coalition, urge you to sign S3505B/A4282B into law. This [bill](#) will move some local elections to even years, giving underrepresented New Yorkers a more meaningful voice in their elections and government. Our coalition fights to make voting more accessible for every eligible New Yorker, and it is why we are championing this crucial reform for underserved voters throughout the state.

Turnout was predictably dismal in this year's odd-year elections across the state, from [Erie](#) to [Suffolk](#) counties and throughout [New York City](#). Unofficial election night [results](#) show a statewide voter turnout rate of just 18 percent. That's 2.3 times lower than the [turnout rate](#) in the 2022 general election. A true participatory democracy demands that all eligible voters have a say in the decisions that affect their communities, but such low turnout frustrates its possibility in our state.

S3505B/A4282B can change this narrative. It's common sense that moving low-turnout elections to even years, where elections for federal and statewide offices attract significantly more voters, will boost turnout. Research supports this conclusion: [several published studies](#) comparing odd- and even-year elections have found that voter participation doubles in even-year elections. It's no wonder that [experts](#) describe the policy as the single most impactful way to increase turnout in local elections.

This reform also addresses a long-standing equity issue for voters who have long been underrepresented in odd-year elections, including young voters and voters of color. We know this is the case based on results from other jurisdictions which have consolidated their elections. For example, when cities in California moved their local elections to even years, they [saw](#) turnout among young voters almost double and turnout from Latino and Asian American communities significantly increase.

Aligning local elections with even-year elections also has strong public support. A recent Siena College [poll](#) shows voters across party lines support moving local elections to even years. Knowing that it will improve voters' ability to stay informed and cast a ballot for vital races, we agree with a majority of New York voters who responded that this reform is "good for New York."

We are counting on you to stand up for voters across New York State and sign S3505B/A4282B into law. Enacting this legislation is a critical step toward ensuring our government represents all New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

Brennan Center for Justice
Brooklyn NAACP
Brooklyn Voters Alliance
Center for Law & Social Justice at Medgar Evers College
Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC)
Citizen Action of NY
Citizens Union
Common Cause New York
Dutchess County Progressive Action Alliance
El Puente de Williamsburg
Faith in New York
Generation Vote
Indivisible New Rochelle
Indivisible Scarsdale
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Make the Road New York
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.
New York Civic Engagement Table
New York Democratic Lawyers Council
Reinvent Albany
The New York Civil Liberties Union
The Workers Circle

Third Act NYC
United Neighborhood Houses
Village Independent Democrats
Westchester for Change
YMCA of Greater New York
YVote