

Fact Sheet: Opening New York City's Closed Primary System

- **Over 1 million “independents” are excluded from voting in the NYC primary**
 - Under the status quo, only voters registered with a political party can participate in the most crucial election.
 - These unaffiliated voters are the fastest-growing segment of the electorate.
- **Unaffiliated voters are young and diverse**
 - Nearly half of unaffiliated voters in NYC are under 40.
 - The [majority of unaffiliated voters](#) in NYC are minority voters; more than a third are Black and Hispanic.
 - Young voters of color [are the most likely](#) to be registered without a party affiliation.
- **They want to participate – but are shut out**
 - Unaffiliated voters are [politically engaged](#) and want to vote in primaries.
 - When excluded from primaries, they're [less likely](#) to vote in general elections.
- **Closed primaries empower a small group of voters and Super PACs**
 - In low turnout primaries, mayors are effectively chosen by fewer than 10% of electorate.
 - The money and power of Super PACs is [at its peak](#) in low turnout partisan primaries.
- **Opening the primary strengthens democracy and representative government**
 - Allowing more voters to participate leads to elected officials who better reflect the city.
 - Campaigns must reach a broader base of voters, reducing polarization and encouraging coalition-building.
- **This reform brings us in line with the rest of the country**
 - New York City is an outlier – nearly all U.S. cities use a version of open primaries.
 - Open or nonpartisan primaries have helped elect mayors like Karen Bass in LA, Michelle Wu in Boston, and Brandon Johnson in Chicago.
 - Candidates will still appear with their party affiliation and be able to seek support from party organizations.
- **This reform complies with strict voting rights protections under state law**
 - A [report](#) by former U.S Attorney General Loretta Lynch found that “there is no basis for finding that [open primaries] would in any way diminish the ability of any protected class to participate in the political process.”
- **Now is the time**
 - A wave of civic energy is building, especially among young voters.
 - We shouldn't waste this moment — NYC is ready to open its elections to all voters.