



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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New Law to Streamline Election Night Procedures, Cuts Red Tape for County Boards of Elections

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Legislation was signed into law this week to improve election night procedures followed by county boards of elections (BOE) to close polls and report the unofficial election tallies. In particular, **the bill authorizes New York City BOE to use portable memory devices rather than hand-written tallying to gather the unofficial returns for transmission to the BOE.**

Under previous interpretations of election law that predated this bill, poll workers were required to cut up the tabulated results tape produced by electronic voting machines for each race by election district, add up the total number of votes for each race, and transcribe these totals on the returns of canvass for each election district. This information was then transported and entered manually into official databases for release to the Associated Press. In the past, this process has produced errors and delays in the reporting of results on election night.

The legislation signed by Governor Cuomo expressly permits BOEs to use portable memory devices (PMDs) that are already used in the electronic voting machine's optical scanners to store and transfer election results to a central location after the polls close. Other provisions of this bill further improve election night procedures by, among other things, allowing consolidation of returns in poll sites with more than one election district.

This bill will be effective for the New York City general election.

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