



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

Celebrating Presidents Day with a Commitment to Civic Participation

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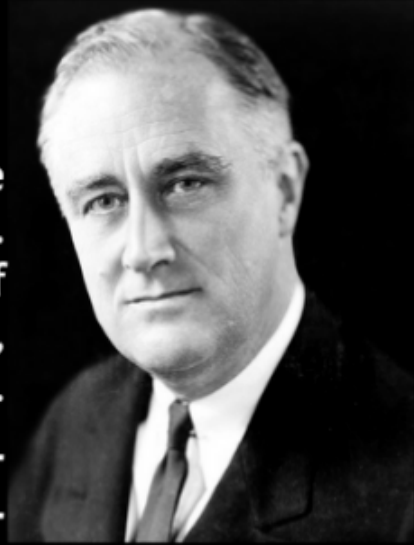
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**Democracy cannot succeed unless
those who express their choice
are prepared to choose wisely.
The real safeguard of
democracy, therefore,
is education.**

**PRESIDENT
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT**



Dear Friends:

Today we honor the legacy, contributions, and sacrifices of American Presidents who have shaped our nation through their vision and leadership. Their service to our country has inspired countless others to be involved in civic life, and for some, to dedicate their lives to public service.

On this Presidents Day, I am proud to announce a package of legislation to further promote civic participation in New York State. I will be introducing three bills shortly which will:

- Require high schools to organize two voter registration drive weeks--one in the fall and one in the spring--to facilitate student voter registration or pre-registration;
- Encourage school districts to include student government organizations in all high schools to ensure students have the opportunity to participate in student government;
- And establish the NYS Civics Corps Program Act to promote civic engagement by allowing high school graduates the opportunity to intern with government offices for a summer or a gap year and appropriate funding to provide a stipend to the graduate.

In addition to the civics package, I am pleased to support the launch of the [**DemocracyReady NY Coalition**](#). The nonprofit will work to secure the right of all New York students to a quality P-12 civics education. The program will ensure students understand citizenship as active and participatory, and it will empower students with the tools to be involved in their local, county, state, and federal governments. Students will be encouraged to focus on the challenges their communities face, and they will have the information and skills to begin to develop solutions. I also commend the Board of Regents for recognizing the importance of civics education and working toward a plan for incorporating it in the curriculum.

I look forward to working with the DemocracyReady NY Coalition, its members, the State Education Department, my legislative colleagues, and education advocates to ensure effective civics education for every student in New York.

Furthermore, my Youth Advisory Council is active and will be meeting again this spring. High school and college students who are interested in participating are encouraged to apply directly at smayer@nysenate.gov, or call 914-934-5250 if they need more information.

Kind regards,

Shelley B. Mayer