



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Zellnor Myrie

Senate Passes Legislation To Allow Electronic Pollbooks, Bringing New York's Election System To The Modern Era

ZELLNOR MYRIE February 27, 2019

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PRESS CONTACT: SenatorMyrieComms@gmail.com, 313-618-7005

Senate Passes Legislation To Allow Electronic Pollbooks, Bringing New York's Election System To The Modern Era...Bill Sponsored By Brooklyn Senator Zellnor Myrie

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ALBANY, NY—Today, State Senator Zellnor Myrie, Chair of the Elections Committee, will introduce Senate Bill S508 to allow electronic poll books in New York. The bill is expected to pass the Senate in this afternoon's session.

Senator Myrie said: "For too long, New York has been stuck in the past when it comes to our voting system. We can pay for a coffee by signing an iPad, but we have to sign our name in script to vote. We're still recording voter history in the same way we did during the years of Tammany Hall and that makes absolutely no sense. It's time to bring New York's voting system into the modern era. E-poll books are an efficient and safe way to to just that."

The bill gives county Boards the option to purchase equipment and implement the use of electronic poll books beginning this fall. It also requires the State Board of Elections to promulgate security standards for electronic poll books and develop backup procedures in case of any equipment failures.

Susan Lerner, Executive Director of Common Cause/NY said: "Switching from paper to electronic poll books is a simple reform that will help New Yorkers vote. If the State Assembly wants early voting to run successfully this November, it must follow the Senate's lead and give electronic poll books the green light immediately."

Dustin M. Czarny, Democratic Caucus Chair, New York State Elections Commissioner Association, Commissioner Onondaga County Board of Elections said: "Electronic Poll Books is a necessary upgrade for our Electoral System so reforms like Early Voting can reach their maximum potential. Not only will it enhance the election day experience but can save thousands of man hours and printing costs of poll books throughout New York State. They are a tried and true method throughout most of the United States and it is about time we bring them to the Empire State."

In the general election of November, 2018, voters throughout the five boroughs were frustrated with long lines at the ballot box. This was in part because in order to vote, poll workers must first locate every voter on a large paper voter registration book and have the voter sign their name with a pen to receive a ballot.

Electronic poll books will make it faster and easier to look up voter registration status, reduce the possibility of errors, reduce phone calls to the Board of Elections or other extra work required when voters cannot be found in "the book," and reduce the need for voters to vote by affidavit ballot instead of regular ballot because they cannot be found in "the book."

At least 34 other states already have or will soon implement electronic voting records. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, “Many jurisdictions have found that using electronic poll-books enables easier, faster, and error-free sharing of voter data, while speeding up polling place administration for election officials.”

Electronic poll books are a non-partisan issue. A previous electronic poll books bill was sponsored by Republican Senator Fred Akshar, who is a member of the current Senate Elections Committee.

Last month, the legislature passed and the governor signed into law a bill that will allow early voting beginning this fall. To make early voting easier to implement, many counties have already requested approval and equipment for electronic poll books.

The bill will go into effect on the first of January following the date when it is signed into law.

ABOUT SENATOR MYRIE

Senator Zellnor Myrie is a Brooklyn native, lawyer, and longtime affordable housing advocate serving the 20th Senate District. Senator Myrie derives inspiration for his public service from his mother who moved to Brooklyn 40 years ago from Costa Rica on the promise of a mattress in a friend’s apartment and a job at a factory. She raised Senator Myrie in a rent-stabilized apartment in Prospect Lefferts Gardens allowing him to attend one of the best public schools in the borough.

Zellnor is a graduate of Brooklyn Technical High School, earned his B.A. in Communications and M.A. in Urban Studies from Fordham University. After Fordham, Zellnor worked as Legislative Director for City Councilman Fernando Cabrera where, among other bills, he helped draft and pass the Tenant Bill of Rights.

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RELATED LEGISLATION

2019-S508

-
- Introduced
 - - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Authorizes computer generated registration lists; relates to the list of supplies to be delivered to poll sites

January 04, 2019

In Senate Committee Elections

Sponsored by Zellnor Myrie

Do you support this bill?