



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Assembly Member Reyes, Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris Announce “Early Vote by Mail Act” Passes NYS Assembly, Enabling New Yorkers To Use Mail-In Ballots For Early Voting

MICHAEL GIANARIS June 10, 2023

| ISSUE: **EARLY VOTE BY MAIL, MAIL-IN BALLOTS, ELECTIONS, BOARD OF ELECTIONS, VOTING**



ALBANY, N.Y. – Assembly Member Karines Reyes, R.N. and Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris announced the State Assembly passed their [new legislation \(S.7394/A.7632\)](#) to expand early voting options to include an Early Vote by Mail choice for all New Yorkers. The legislation passed the State Senate earlier this week and now heads to Governor Kathy Hochul’s desk for approval.

“We have seen how important it is to have access to mail-in voting,” **Assembly Member Karines Reyes, R.N.** said. “This critical legislation will make it easier for New Yorkers to exercise their constitutional right to vote.”

“Voting is a fundamental right and the easier we make it to vote, the healthier our democracy will be,” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “I am proud both houses of the Legislature passed this bill and we continue to build on its important work of expanding access to the ballot box for all New Yorkers.”

The bill would give all New Yorkers the option of Early Voting by mail. While the state constitution requires a prescribed excuse for Election Day absentee voting, it does not constrain the Legislature from enacting a unique process for Early Voting. Similar proposals have been enacted and survived challenges in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.

New Yorkers would request an Early Voting ballot from their local Board of Elections and it would need to be returned before the close of polls on Election Day.

The legislation is supported by groups including the Leadership Now Project, Institute for Responsive Government, Actors’ Equity Association, Make the Road New York, StandUp America, and Tech:NYC.

**Sam Oliker-Friedland, executive director of the Institute for Responsive Government** said, “Some 35 states already offer no-excuse vote by mail options, and now thanks to the leadership of Senator Gianaris, Assemblymember Reyes, Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, and Speaker Carl Heastie, New York will be joining them. No-excuse vote-by-mail is a win-win that increases eligible voter participation, allowing workers who have unconventional work schedules

or are elderly to cast a ballot by mail. It also eases the burden on election officials by reducing the demand on Election Day.”

**Christina Harvey, Executive Director of Stand Up America.** “We’re grateful to Senator Gianaris and Assembly Member Reyes for their leadership in advancing this crucial measure to strengthen voting access in New York. By creating a permanent mail-in voting system open to all voters, more New Yorkers will be able to make their voices heard in our elections, whether they are hardworking people who may not have enough hours in the day to get to the polls, seniors who can’t vote in person, or someone who prefers to fill out their ballot at their own pace in the privacy of their home.”

**Daniella Ballou-Aares, CEO & Co-Founder of the Leadership Now Project** said, “A stronger, more accessible democracy makes New York a more desirable place to live and work. Vote by mail is a crucial modernization that 35 states have already adopted. We are thrilled to see speedy passage of this important measure.”