



THE NEW N.Y. GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION AND CITIZEN EMPOWERMENT ACT

	Existing Law	The AG's Reforms
1	Existing law contains numerous <u>inconsistent</u> and <u>confusing</u> procedures for consolidation or dissolution that vary depending on the type of local government entity involved.	The Act establishes <u>uniform, simplified and streamlined</u> consolidation and dissolution procedures.
2	Existing law <u>disempowers</u> governing bodies by arbitrarily barring them from initiating consolidation or dissolution processes regarding certain kinds of local government entities.	The Act <u>empowers</u> governing bodies to initiate consolidation and dissolution processes for all covered local government entities.
3	Existing law <u>disempowers</u> citizens by arbitrarily barring them from initiating consolidation or dissolution process with respect to certain kinds of local government entities.	With respect to all covered local government entities, the Act <u>empowers</u> citizens to place consolidation or dissolution on a popular ballot by collecting petition signatures from voters.
4	To the extent existing law contemplates the possibility of citizens petitioning to initiate consolidation or dissolution, it establishes a <u>confusing and hyper-technical process</u> that has lead to litigation and/or disqualification both of signatures and of whole petitions.	The Act <u>clarifies</u> and defines the petition process and petition form for citizens to initiate consolidation or dissolution.
5	Existing law establishes <u>different signature requirements</u> depending on the kind of local government entity involved.	The Act establishes a <u>uniform signature requirement</u> of 10% or 5,000, whichever is less, to initiate the consolidation and dissolution process. For small entities with 500 or fewer electors the petition shall contain the signatures of at least 20% of the electors.
6	Existing law requires that <u>citizens own property</u> to sign petitions or vote in certain consolidation and dissolution proceedings.	The Act <u>strikes from the law all pecuniary or propertied qualifications</u> for signing petitions and voting on propositions to consolidate or dissolve a local government entity.
7	Existing law <u>disempowers</u> counties from exercising their constitutional authority to abolish local government entities.	The Act authorizes counties to abolish entire units of local government, subject to certain conditions including a county-wide referendum with special majority requirements.