



PAMELA J. HUNTER
Assemblywoman 128th District
Onondaga County

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

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Subcommittee on Women Veterans

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January 9, 2018

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We, women of color, write to request your support for the inclusion of early voting and the closure of the "LLC Loophole" in the Fiscal 2018-2019 enacted budget. We also request your support for up to \$3.1 million in this year's budget for early voting in order to address objections about costs that would otherwise be imposed on local governments.

Both of these election law reforms are supported by the Assembly Majority. The LLC Loophole was created by a Board of Elections decision over two decades ago in which the Board ruled that LLCs would be treated as individuals, rather than corporations, for purposes of New York's campaign finance laws. It has since allowed those seeking to circumvent limits on campaign contributions to exert an unfair level of influence by using multiple LLCs to donate virtually unlimited amounts of money directly to candidates nearly anonymously. We believe that finally closing the LLC Loophole is long overdue, and that it should be included in the executive budget proposal.

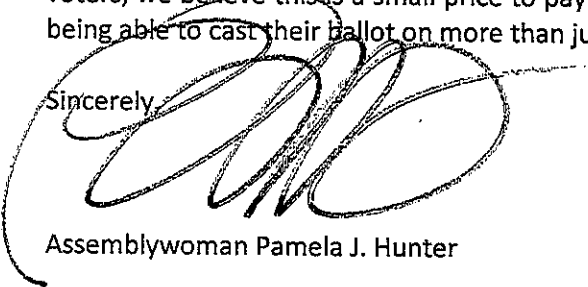
We also believe it is time for New York to join the 37 states and Washington, DC that allow for early voting. The Assembly has passed bills that would offer voters the opportunity to vote in person prior to Election Day several times. Establishing an early voting period would give busy New Yorkers, who often must juggle many personal, family, and work obligations, more flexibility in finding a time to vote, making voting more convenient and access to the polls more equitable.

One of the primary objections raised by those who oppose early voting is that it imposes an unfunded mandate on localities that bear the expense of election administration. This concern has been expressed especially with respect to smaller and more rural counties. The legislation the Assembly passed attempted to address this issue by providing a shorter early voting period and greater flexibility to county boards by tying the number of early voting poll sites mandated in each county to the number of voters registered in that county. This would significantly reduce the cost of implementing early voting, particularly in less populous counties, compared to early voting bills the Assembly passed in prior years. Yet even with these reductions in cost, objections were still raised about the unfunded mandate.

Though last year's Executive Budget proposal established early voting, in order to fully overcome the obstacles that have blocked early voting from being enacted in New York, we ask that you support the

inclusion of an early voting fund in this year's budget. We would suggest that each of New York's 62 counties be entitled to reimbursement for their actual expenses related to early voting up to \$50,000, resulting in a maximum cost to the state of \$3.1 million in an even-numbered election year when there are elections in every county and a lesser amount in off years. In many rural counties, which would only be required to have a single poll site that could be located at the county board of elections office, it is likely that this funding would be adequate to cover all of the expenses associated with early voting. Given the vital role that voting plays in a participatory democracy, and the benefits early voting provides voters, we believe this is a small price to pay to remove the major barrier preventing New Yorkers from being able to cast their ballot on more than just a single day.

Sincerely,



Assemblywoman Pamela J. Hunter

Lataya Jayren
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Quana Richardson
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Jaime Williams

Maritza Davila
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Alicia Hyndman
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Wesley E. Riches
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Michel Titus
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Peoples-Stokes
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