



MEMO OF SUPPORT

[A3291 \(Dinowitz\)](#)

Makes expansion of absentee voting provisions permanent

May 1, 2023

TITLE OF BILL

An act to amend chapter 139 of the laws of 2020 amending the election law relating to absentee voting, in relation to the effectiveness thereof; and to amend chapter 2 of the laws of 2022 amending the election law relating to absentee voting in village elections, in relation to the effectiveness thereof.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS

Section 1 removes language in the laws of 2020 (chapter 139, section 2) that set a December 31, 2022 sunset date for an expanded definition of “illness” that allowed voters to vote via absentee ballots when they fear contracting or spreading a disease.

Section 2 makes the same change as in Section 1 for village election laws (laws of 2022, section 4, chapter 2).

Section 3 is the effective date.

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

Reinvent Albany supports this bill because we believe that the fear of disease should not prevent someone from being able to vote.

New York’s absentee voting law remains [one of the country’s worst](#) and requires voters to provide an “excuse” in order to vote absentee. When the COVID-19 pandemic started, the state passed a law providing an exception for voters who feared contracting disease. Unfortunately, the law expired at the end of 2022, meaning that the state reverted to its prior, restrictive absentee voting laws.

The expansion passed during the pandemic should be made permanent. We urge the Senate and the Assembly to pass the bill.