



# NEWS RELEASE

## NEW YORK PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP STATEMENT ON POTENTIAL VOTER REGISTRATION IRREGULARITIES AND SHORTCOMINGS IN THE STATE'S VOTER REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

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Once again, New York's archaic voter registration system has highlighted dramatic shortcomings in the administration of elections across the state.

Charges of potentially disenfranchising purges of voters have been reported in Brooklyn affecting more than 100,000 voters. While these numbers could reflect a proper yet delayed purge of voters who have died or moved, confidence in the electoral process is essential for public confidence in election results and our democracy.

In addition, the State's confusing and indefensibly lengthy registration deadlines not only blocked some voters wishing to cast their ballots, but also lead to widespread confusion at polling places across the state.

NYPIRG supports the announcement by NYC Controller Scott Stringer that he will conduct an audit of the NYC Board of Elections. Specific attention must be given to whether a single standard for the purge process is applied across all 5 boroughs.

Regardless of the outcome of any investigations of voter purges, the actual scandal is New York's outdated and archaic voter registration laws. Instead of purging voters, we should be enfranchising them. NYPIRG calls for Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature to modernize New York's voter registration system by:

- (1) Automatic Voter Registration and updating of enrollment information of citizens interacting with all state and local agencies;
- (2) Allowing voters to register and vote on election day; and
- (3) Elimination of the patronage controlled Boards of Elections, starting with the merit selection of permanent Board employees across the state.

NYPIRG recognizes that some of these reforms will take time to enact. In the interim New York should shorten its registration and change of enrollment deadlines to the currently state constitutionally-required 10 days before the election.