AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

How do we turn 1.1 million New Yorkers into 1.1 million new voters? It starts with Automatic Voter Registration (AVR).

WHAT IS AVR?

AVR is a common-sense solution that makes two simple yet transformative changes to how New Yorkers register to vote:

1. Eligible citizens who interact with government agencies – like the DMV and the Department of Health – are registered to vote or have their existing registration information updated, unless they decline, or “opt out”.
2. Those agencies transfer voter registration information electronically to election officials, instead of the current paper based system.

WHY DOES NEW YORK NEED IT?

Currently, there are 1.1 million New Yorkers who are eligible to vote, but are unregistered. Our outdated voter registration system needs to be modernized to ensure all eligible voters have a say in our democracy.

WHAT SHOULD IT LOOK LIKE IN NEW YORK?

15 states and Washington DC have adopted some form of AVR since 2015. Since no two states are the same, AVR looks different across the country. New York needs a model that is implemented at multiple government agencies (not just the DMV) and provides adequate safeguards to protect our most vulnerable populations (particularly ineligible people and people who need their information).

HOW DOES AVR INCREASE VOTER PARTICIPATION?

By making voter registration opt-out instead of opt-in, AVR has caused a significant increase in voter registration in every state that has implemented it. AVR keeps the voter rolls more accurate, since voters update their registration information (like their address) when they interact with state agencies. This prevents confusion on Election Day and limits the risks associated with inaccurate rolls.

HOW DOES AVR SAVES MONEY?

Electronically transferring information means less paper and lower mailing costs. Election officials no longer need to enter voters’ handwritten responses, making their jobs easier and reducing typos on the voter rolls.

Who Is Let NY Vote?

Let NY Vote is a statewide coalition of grassroots groups, established organizations, and everyday citizens fighting to modernize New York’s elections. Our goal is to pass simple solutions to improve our elections and make registering and voting more accessible and equitable for all eligible New Yorkers.

Visit LetNYvote.org to find out how you can help build the movement.