



## 2019-20 New York State YMCA

### Youth And Government

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FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: Senate Liberty 1

Bill #:SL-01

1 **Sponsors:** Niquita Varier, Juliet Lovelace, Shana Hatia

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3 **An Act To:** Amend 5-102 of Article 5, Title 1 of the New York State Election Law to  
4 lower the minimum voting age for local elections

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6 *The People of the State of New York, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

7

#### 8 **Purpose:**

9 AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to the qualifications of voters in local  
10 elections;

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#### 12 **Summary of Provisions:**

##### 13 Section 1

- 14 a) Federal election - Elections in the United States that are held for government  
15 officials at the federal level (ex. President)
- 16 b) State election - Elections held in each individual states that are held for state  
17 representatives (ex. Governor, state legislative representatives)
- 18 c) Local election - Elections that take place to select office-holders in local  
19 government (city or town), such as mayors and councillors. It can also be  
20 referred to as "municipal elections" (ex. sheriff, city council members, mayor,  
21 school board)
- 22 d) Vote - indication of a choice between two or more candidates or courses of  
23 action expressed through election
- 24 e) Residence - a place where someone lives such as a state, county, village,  
25 city, and street.

26

##### 27 Section 2

28 Qualifications of voters; age and residence.

29 1. No person shall be qualified to register for and vote at any state and federal  
30 election unless he is a citizen of the United States and is or will be, on the day of  
31 such election, eighteen years of age or over, and a resident of this state ~~and of~~  
32 ~~the county, city or village~~ for a minimum of thirty days next preceding such  
33 election.

34 No person shall be qualified to register for and vote at municipal elections unless he  
35 is a citizen of the United States and is or will be, on the day of such election,  
36 sixteen years of age or over, and a resident of this state and of the county, city or  
37 village for a minimum of thirty days next preceding such election.

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41 **Justification:**

42 Passing this bill will give youth citizens a voice in their future. 16 is considered a  
43 perfect voting age as in certain states a 16-year-old is considered old enough to be  
44 examined for the death penalty, eligible to drive, qualified to hold a job, and are old  
45 enough to drop out of school. At the age of 17 you are legally able to join the  
46 military, with parental consent, as well. I believe that if people feel so passionately  
47 about something they should have the right to be heard. The right to vote would  
48 provide a constituency for children, not only for those registered to vote, but also  
49 for their younger brothers and sisters. Many people believe that having the power  
50 to vote is the strongest way to get legislators' attention. The concept is to slowly  
51 introduce 16 and 17 year olds to the idea of being able to take their future into  
52 their own hands, and help decide what kind of government they want stating locally  
53 within their counties and cities.

54

55 **Fiscal Implications:**

56 Instead of changing the voting registration form for the state entirely, which states  
57 the age to be eighteen, students of ages 16 and 17 can be eligible to register for  
58 the municipal elections locally at their own school. If one does not attend a school  
59 they can register at their local city or town hall. This registration only grants them  
60 access to vote at local elections.

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62 **Effective Date:** January 1, 2021