



LET ALL NEW YORKERS VOTE!

Why Restoring Municipal Voting Rights for Legal Residents is a Great Idea for New York City

1. It Strengthens Democracy

- ✓ We live in a democracy, yet 1 in 5 adult New Yorkers (approximately 1 million people) live here legally but are denied the right to vote in city elections because of their citizenship status.
- ✓ Voting embodies the principles of equality and freedom that define a democracy.
- ✓ Nothing in our state or federal constitution precludes noncitizen voting; in fact, residents have voted in local and state elections throughout US history.
- ✓ Every previous effort to expand democracy (to African-Americans, women, 18-20 year olds, among others) has been met with resistance, but afterwards was recognized as a positive step in the direction of a truly democratic society. When everyone is allowed to participate in decision-making, there is a greater sense of shared responsibility, democracy is better served, and everyone benefits.

2. It Upholds Principles of Fairness and Equal Access

- ✓ Non-citizen NYC residents pay taxes at the same rate as their citizen neighbors, yet they have no say in how that tax money is spent.
- ✓ Legal residents live here, own businesses, send their children to school, and contribute to every aspect of the economic, cultural and social life of this city --- yet cannot vote.
- ✓ This is “taxation without representation,” an injustice which stirred this country towards independence more than 200 years ago.

3. New York City Can & Should be a Model

- ✓ NYC is a city of immigrants and has always been a model for the world on how people from diverse backgrounds can live and work together as one society.
- ✓ In today’s world, innovation and new approaches are emerging more and more at the city level than at the national level, and NYC is no exception. A globalized world demands new ways of operating; expanded voting rights in NYC would have repercussion well beyond the city’s limits.
- ✓ Decisions made at the municipal level do not impact national security or federal policy, but rather issues that affect the day-to-day quality of life of *all* residents: education, public transportation, affordable housing, healthcare, green spaces, etc. Our neighbors may not have US citizenship, but they are **New Yorkers**, and we want and need their full contribution in the city’s ongoing growth & development.

The New York Coalition to Expand Voting Rights is working to help pass legislation in the New York City Council that would restore the rights of all documented residents to vote in local elections (Mayor, City Council, Public Advocate, etc.). For more information, visit www.ivotenyc.org

