February 5, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Temporary President and Majority Leader of the New York State Senate
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12247

The Honorable Carl E. Heastie
Speaker of the New York State Assembly
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Governor Cuomo, Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, and Speaker Heastie:

We thank you for again prioritizing voting reforms by beginning this year with a renewed commitment to enacting automatic voter registration legislation in 2020.

We were pleased to see the Senate move this bill so early this session, and appreciate that both the Governor and the Assembly have committed to prioritizing this early this year. Now we strongly encourage legislative leaders and the Governor to keep their eye on the prize and work to pass this critical legislation as soon as possible. That is why we are joining forces to ensure this issue gets the attention it deserves.

Unfortunately, New York has a poor record of registering eligible voters, with a full one million eligible voters not registered. AVR will dramatically improve New York’s performance, while also modernizing government systems and making them more accurate and efficient.

As you know, under AVR, when an eligible resident does business with a designated state agency, the AVR system simply uses that information – which citizens are already providing to government offices – to register them or update their registration information. AVR will ease voter registration for historically underrepresented populations, including low-income people and people of color, who are too often missed by traditional registration methods. Additionally, AVR legislation provides important safeguards to protect non-citizens and other communities ineligible for voter registration.

Now is the time for New York to modernize its antiquated voter registration system. By enacting AVR legislation, you will be bolstering the security and accuracy of New York’s voter rolls, while maximizing voter registration in the Empire State.

Count on us to support your efforts in every possible way to get this legislation enacted into law.

Sincerely,

32BJ SEIU
Anti-Defamation League New York
AVR NOW
Brooklyn Voters Alliance
Center for Popular Democracy
Chinese-American Planning Council
College & Community Fellowship
Common Cause/NY
Dutchess County Progressive Action Alliance
Elmont Cultural Center
Empire State Indivisible
Generation Citizen
Indivisible Project
Interfaith Impact of New York State
Make the Road
New York City For Change
New York Civil Liberties Union
New York Democratic Lawyers Council
New York Hotel Trades Council
Public Citizen
Stand Up America
Working Families Party