



The League of Women Voters of New York State
62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207
Phone: 518-465-4162 Fax: 518-465-0812
www.lwvny.org E-Mail: lwvny@lwvny.org

**THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS**
of New York State

**MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF:
A. 5564 Kavanagh / S. 0859 Carlucci**

DATE: April 20, 2015

SUBJECT: *An Act to amend the election law, in relation to enacting the “voter empowerment act of New York”*

The League of Women Voters of New York State supports the Voter Empowerment Act (VEA), which would represent a major step forward in making it easier to register to vote, thereby extending the franchise to more New Yorkers. The VEA would bring New York’s woefully inadequate voter registration system into the digital age by harnessing existing technology to save money for the state and taxpayers, enhance registration accuracy and reliability, and increase the number of eligible voters who are registered.

New York State currently ranks near the bottom in the nation in voter registration rates. Under the current, expensive paper-based system, election clerks must contend with mounds of paper forms submitted by voters up until the registration deadline while also preparing for Election Day. This only creates opportunity for voter disenfranchisement and perpetuates New York’s dismal voter participation rates. More registered voters will lead to more voters at the polls on Election Day.

The VEA will modernize New York’s voter registration system by providing convenient and secure options for voters to become and stay registered in a way that largely eliminates the errors and frustrations that plague the current system. It will give New Yorkers more choices about how to register to vote, restore faith in our registration processes, and ensure that our democracy is accessible to all eligible voters. Modernizing New York’s voter registration systems will also be financially beneficial to taxpayers because paperless registration saves money on data entry, printing, and the cost of mailing tons of paper.

New York State can, and should, be a model for accuracy, efficiency, and confidence in our registration system. The VEA will help make it that model. As such, the League of Women Voters of New York State strongly urges your support of the Voter Empowerment Act.