

**RESOLUTION NO. 125 - 2023**  
**RESOLUTION URGING THE GOVERNOR TO VETO A.04282B/S.3505B**  
**(To Move Certain Local Elections to Even-Numbered Years)**

Introduced by Legislator Lawrence L. Dolhof, Chairman of the Board.

WHEREAS, the Lewis County Board of Legislators believes that increasing participation in the election process and reducing costs of government operations is good for our republic; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Member Amy Paulin and State Senator James Skoufis reintroduced legislation that would move **local** elections to even-number years during the 2023 legislative session; and

WHEREAS, versions of this legislation were introduced in previous years and failed to reach the floor for a vote due to lack of support; and

WHEREAS, after the 2022 session concluded, the bill sponsor indicated that hearings would be held on the proposal through the Election Committee process; however, there were no hearings held; and

WHEREAS, the legislation passed in the middle of the night on the last days of the legislative session which is counter to the idea of an open and transparent government; and

WHEREAS, the Lewis County Board of Legislators has several concerns with this bill, including the following:

- 1) this legislation usurps the Home Rule powers reserved by local governments and protected by the Constitution of the State of New York, raising questions of legality and constitutional authority;
- 2) local municipalities have had the ability to change their elections to even-number years for decades, and chose not to do so;
- 3) establishing the schedule of local elections is the right of the local government, and has been for more than 100 years;
- 4) the Assembly Bill sponsor indicated that she had not received any messages of support for this proposal from any of the 57 Counties and 933 Towns across New York State impacted by this legislation; and yet, the legislative bodies circumvented their own legislative committee process during this session, limiting public input and understanding of the impacts before pushing through this legislation;

- 5) this legislation excludes more than half of all New Yorkers who vote in cities and villages from the changes to election law, as well as certain offices within all counties and towns;
- 6) there has been no financial analysis or operational analysis of the impacts on local Boards of Elections by this proposed change;
- 7) this will create confusion amongst voters in towns and counties across New York State. Separating the elections affords voters more time and focus to better understand important local issues and provides candidates the appropriate platforms to explain their stance on issues without having to compete against national and state level campaigns;
- 8) moving local elections to even-numbered years would increase the cost of campaigns for local office, reducing the number of candidates willing to invest funds into their own campaign, because the cost of media will increase to compete with national and state level campaign advertisements; and
- 9) there are significant legal and constitutional questions regarding the legality of this measure that have not been adequately vetted and addressed;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as follows:

Section 1. The Lewis County Board of Legislators urges the Governor to oppose this legislation and utilize her veto authority to reject it.

Section 2. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Section 3. The Clerk of the Board is directed to forward copies of this resolution to Governor Kathy Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Senate Minority Leader Robert Ortt, Assembly Minority Leader William Barclay, Assembly Bill Sponsor Amy Paulin, Senate Bill Sponsor James Skoufis, and all others the Board deems appropriate to receive same.

Moved by Legislator Virkler, seconded by Legislator Moser, and adopted on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2023.