

6/20/2023



SARATOGA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

RESOLUTION 175 - 2023

Introduced by Law and Finance: Supervisors Schopf, Barrett, Edwards, Lant, Tollisen and M. Veitch

URGING THE GOVERNOR TO VETO A.04282B/S.3505B TO MOVE CERTAIN LOCAL ELECTIONS TO EVEN- NUMBERED YEARS

WHEREAS, the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors believes that increasing participation in the election process and reducing cost of government options 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 reached the floor for a vote due to a lack of support; and

WHEREAS, after the 2022 sessions 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 Saratoga County Board of Supervisors has several concerns with this bill; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, local municipalities have had the ability to change their elections to even-number years for decades, and chose not to do so; and

WHEREAS, we believe that establishing the schedule of local elections is that right of the local government, and has been for more than 100 years; and

WHEREAS, 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

WHEREAS, this legislation excludes more than half of all New Yorkers who vote in cities and villages from changes to election law, creating an inequity among New York voters; and

WHEREAS, this legislation unfairly excludes the elections to offices in New York City and all other cities and villages in New York State, as well as certain offices within all counties and towns; and

WHEREAS, the proposed legislation circumvented the legislative committee process during this session, limiting public input and understanding of the impact; and

WHEREAS, there has been no financial analysis or operational analysis of the impact on local Board of Elections; and

WHEREAS, there are concerns that the election and ballot counting technology would not be able to adequately meet the demands of the significantly increased ballot size; and

WHEREAS, this will create confusion amongst voters in towns and counties across New York State; and

WHEREAS, separating the elections affords voters more time to better understand important local issues and provides candidates the appropriate platform to explain their stance on issues; and

WHEREAS, 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

WHEREAS, there are significant legal and constitutional questions regarding the legality of this measure that have not been adequately addressed; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this Board of Supervisors urges the Governor to oppose this legislation and utilize her veto authority to reject this proposal; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be distributed by the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to Governor Kathy Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Senate Minority Leader Robert Ort, Assembly Minority Leader William Barclay, Assembly Bill Sponsor Amy Paulin, Senate Bill Sponsor James Skoufis, Senator James Tedisco, Assemblymember John McDonald, Assemblymember Mary Beth Walsh, Assemblymember Carrie Woerner, and Assemblymember Matthew Simpson.

BUDGET IMPACT STATEMENT: No Budget Impact.

June 20, 2023 Regular Meeting

Motion to Adopt: Supervisor Hammond

Second: Supervisor Barrett

AYES (210214): Eric Connolly (11831), Joseph Grasso (4328), Philip C. Barrett (19014.5), Jonathon Schopf (19014.5), Eric Butler (6500), Diana Edwards (819), Jean Raymond (1333), Michael Smith (3525), Kevin Veitch (8004), Arthur M. Wright (1976), Kevin Tollisen (25662), Mark Hammond (17130), Thomas Richardson (5163), Scott Ostrander (18800), Theodore Kusnierz (16202), Sandra Winney (2075), Matthew E. Veitch (14245.5), Edward D. Kinowski (9022), John Lawler (8208), John Lant (17361)

NOES (0):

ABSENT (25296): Willard H. Peck (5242), Thomas N. Wood, III (5808), Tara N. Gaston (14245.5)