



**Support of the New York Amendment to Allow for No-Excuse Absentee Voting 2021**  
**Prepared by the Columbia County Democratic Committee's (CCDC) Issues Committee**  
**Approved and Adopted by the CCDC on September 23, 2021**

**Background:**

The No-Excuse Absentee Ballot Amendment would amend Section 2 of Article II of the New York State Constitution. This measure will be a referendum question on the ballot in New York on November 2, 2021, as a legislatively referred constitutional amendment. Voters will be asked to decide whether to amend the Constitution to authorize no-excuse voting.

- Voting **YES** supports authorizing the state legislature to pass a statute for no-excuse absentee voting.
- Voting **NO** opposes this constitutional amendment, therefore continuing to require voters to be absent from their county of residence, ill, or physically disabled to vote with an absentee ballot.

What would the ballot measure change about absentee voting in NY?

The ballot measure would authorize the New York State Legislature to pass a statute for no-excuse absentee voting, meaning any registered voter could request and vote with an absentee ballot. No reason or excuse would be required to vote by absentee ballot.

How does NY State compare to other states?

As of 2021, New York is one of **16** states that require voters to provide an excuse to receive an absentee ballot. To vote with an absentee ballot in NY, voters are required to: (1) be absent from their home county, or (2) unable to appear at a polling place because they are ill, or physically disabled.

Of the remaining states, **29** provide for no excuse absentee voting and **six** use mail-in voting which means that every registered voter receives a mail-in ballot.

Do voters support No-Excuse Absentee Voting?

Results of a June Siena Poll of 809 registered voters indicated that 55% supported this proposal with 35% opposed and 10% undecided.

**Reasons to Support:**

- Allows more people to vote in the manner most convenient for them, including minority voters, voters with disabilities, those with lower socioeconomic status, and those in rural communities, with lack of transportation.
- Likely to reduce both polling site lines and administrative burden on officials, thereby decreasing the total administrative cost of elections.
- Best practices exist for reducing fraud and increasing reliability.

**Reasons to Oppose:**

- The case has not been made that additional absentee voting will result in a meaningful increase in voter turnout.
- There are concerns that the use of no-excuse absentee ballots can too easily result in citizens losing their votes due to mistakes.
- No-excuse absentees may be too easily compromised by those seeking to stuff the ballot box.

**The CCDC fully supports this Amendment and urges its adoption this November.**

**References:**

- Ballotpedia.org/New York Proposal 4, Allow for No-Excuse Absentee Voting Amendment (2021). [https://ballotpedia.org/New\\_York\\_Proposal\\_4,\\_Allow\\_for\\_No-Excuse\\_Absentee\\_Voting\\_Amendment\\_\(2021\)](https://ballotpedia.org/New_York_Proposal_4,_Allow_for_No-Excuse_Absentee_Voting_Amendment_(2021))
- BallotPedia.org/Arguments for and Against No-Excuse Absentee mail in voting (2021). [https://ballotpedia.org/Arguments\\_for\\_and\\_against\\_no-excuse\\_absentee/mail-in\\_voting](https://ballotpedia.org/Arguments_for_and_against_no-excuse_absentee/mail-in_voting)