

# Assemblymember Harvey Epstein

Assembly District 74



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Dear Neighbor,

With new Senate leadership, in just two days we passed incredible voting reforms, GENDA, and banned conversion therapy. The 2019 session is off to a great start, and I am excited for what is to come.

See you around the district,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harvey Epstein", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Harvey

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### Making Voting Easier and More Accessible



To give New Yorkers ample opportunity to vote, I co-sponsored, and the Assembly passed legislation that would establish early voting in New York State, which would take place during a nine-day period before any general,

primary, run-off primary or special election (A.780). During the early voting period, polling locations would be required to be open for eight hours on weekdays and five hours on weekends and holidays, and to offer evening hours on at least two days. This is a huge leap forward for all New Yorkers.

To increase access to mail-in ballots at home, the legislative package includes a bill that would amend the New York State Constitution to allow any citizen to receive an absentee ballot upon request – no questions asked (A.778). Under current law, residents can only receive absentee ballots if they expect to be absent from the county on the day of the election, or if they have an illness or physical disability. The amendment must be passed by both the Assembly and Senate again in 2021 before it goes before voters as a ballot referendum later that year.

### **Modernizing Voter Registration**

Further, we passed legislation to allow for same-day voter registration, a practice already adopted by 17 other states and Washington, D.C. The bill would amend the state constitution by removing the requirement that New Yorkers register to vote at least 10 days before an election (A.777).

Legislation was also passed instructing boards of elections to automatically transfer voter enrollment for New Yorkers who move from one county to another (A.775). And, to encourage young people to vote and become civically engaged, the legislative package includes a measure that would allow 16- and 17-year-olds to pre-register to vote (A.774).

### **Combining the State and Federal Primaries**

Yesterday we passed legislation to consolidate the state's election calendar by combining the state and federal primary election dates to the fourth Tuesday in June (A.779). This would save taxpayers an estimated \$25 million, reduce the burden on the board of elections and keep New York State compliant with the federal Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act. Further, holding both primaries on the same date would make it easier for New Yorkers to vote, increasing voter turnout. Currently, New York is the only state that holds its federal and state primaries on different days.

While these are important early victories, it is just a first step in reforming our election system. I will continue to push for a statewide campaign finance system, loosening rules to change party registration, and reforming voting rules for people on probation.

### **Closing the LLC Loophole**

Under current election law as interpreted by the State Board of Elections, individuals and corporations can make unlimited contributions to the same candidate, political party or campaign committee by creating multiple limited liability companies (LLCs). Each LLC is treated as an individual donor, even if multiple LLCs are owned by the same person or entity, which makes it harder to determine the real contributor and allows them to evade campaign contribution limits.

The Assembly's measure would extend the \$5,000 aggregate contribution limit, already applicable to corporations, to include LLCs, and require LLCs to disclose the names of individuals with membership interests, attributing LLC contributions to them in proportion to such membership interest (A.776). By closing the LLC loophole, we can increase transparency, help level the playing field and prevent nearly unlimited campaign contributions.



Discrimination, hate and bigotry are cruel and ugly, and unfortunately, they're a part of daily life for many transgender individuals. That's why the Assembly has once again passed the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA). GENDA protects the rights of transgender and gender-nonconforming New Yorkers and makes gender identity and expression one of the state's protected classes so that no one can be denied essentials like housing, health care, education and employment solely because of who they are (A.747). I am a proud co-sponsor of this bill.

New Yorkers deserve to be treated with equality, respect, dignity and compassion, we made history and made GENDA law. This is a fight I have never taken lightly. With a federal administration driven by fear and intolerance and hell-bent on rolling back rights, it's up to us to spread love, not hate, and protect one another. For the transgender and gender-nonconforming New Yorkers who have unfairly been seen as unequal in the eyes of the law for far too long, this is your victory.

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### Upcoming Events

The deadline to join our Youth Council has been extended to the end of the month!

Check out the application process below!

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### Save the Date!

**Forum on the Legalization of Marijuana** | Sunday, February 10th | 2PM-4PM | Boys & Girls Republic, located at [888 E 6th Street](#)

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