MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF A2682 BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

SPONSOR: Assembly Member Lavine
BILL NUMBER: A2682 (same as S0508 (Kavanagh)
TITLE OF BILL: AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to enacting the voter friendly ballot act; and to repeal section 7-108 of such law relating to the form of ballots.
DATE: January 28, 2019

The Let NY Vote coalition supports A2682, The Voter Friendly Ballot Act, the passage of which is among our coalition’s priorities for 2019. New York’s voters have had to struggle with hard to read and confusing ballots for far too long. This bill eliminates unnecessary requirements that lead to confusing and cluttered ballots, incorporating usability and design standards developed by private industry. The current ballot is cluttered and hard to read:

- Party emblems and the pointing finger add clutter;
- All capital letters and centered headings make it harder to read;
- Instructions use complex language and are placed where they are less likely to be read;
- Voting ovals are to the right of candidate names; and
- Lay-out requirements often result in very small difficult to read font size.

The Voter Friendly Ballot Act would allow ballots that:

- Contain significantly shorter instructions that are prominently displayed, easily understood and free of legal jargon;
- Display candidates’ names in clear, bold, readable text;
- Reduce clutter near candidates’ names, increasing readability for voters and decreasing scanner error;
- Position fill-in ovals directly next to candidates’ names on the left, dramatically reducing ambiguity and confusion; and
- Increase text size to increase legibility

The Let NY Vote Coalition supports the passage of A2682 and urges your support of the bill.
Let NY Vote is a statewide coalition of grassroots activists and established organizations working together to modernize NY’s voting laws. Our mission is to ensure that common-sense solutions are passed to protect and expand the freedom to vote for every eligible New Yorker.

Please contact Susan Lerner, Common Cause/NY at (212) 691-6421 with any questions.