

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Establishing In-Person Early Voting in New Jersey

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Historic Legislation Continues Murphy Administration's Commitment to Expanding Access to Democracy

TRENTON – Governor Murphy, joined by legislators and advocates including national voting rights leader Stacey Abrams, today signed legislation (S3203), which establishes in-person early voting in the State of New Jersey. The legislation is the latest in a series of initiatives by the Murphy Administration and the Legislature to expand access to voting rights and democracy amidst a wave of voter disenfranchisement measures across the country.

"While other states are looking to find ways to keep their citizens from voting, we have consistently worked to ensure that the voices of the people are heard," said Governor Murphy. "I am immensely proud to sign this legislation today and to remind the nation that our democracy wins when we open the doors of our polling places wide instead of slamming them shut."

"As New Jersey's chief election officer, I welcome this opportunity to make our state even more voter-friendly," said Secretary of State Tahesha Way. "In person early voting will strengthen our democracy by providing voters with more options to cast their ballot."

Primary sponsors for S3203 include Senators Nia H. Gill, Linda R. Greenstein, Shirley K. Turner, and Assemblymembers Andrew Zwicker, Joseph Danielsens, and Verlina Reynolds-Jackson.

"Our accountability over government, opportunities to better our lives and the chance to elect our representatives all depend upon our ability to access the ballot," said Senator Nia Gill. "Preventing voter intimidation, passing early voting and implementing electronic poll books will ensure our fundamental right to have our voices heard. There are few rights more important than a citizen's ability to vote."

"Early in-person voting strengthens our electoral process," said Senator Linda Greenstein. "This law will provide greater accessibility to the polls and encourage greater voter turnout, ensuring the will of the people is adequately heard throughout New Jersey."

"After the horrific voter suppression law which was enacted in Georgia last week, I am proud we are continuing our efforts to make voting as accessible as possible. This legislation will encourage and increase voter registration and turnout, especially in off-year elections," said Senator Shirley Turner. "Early in-person voting sites should and will be easily accessible to all individuals in order to ensure a more convenient and fair voting system for all New Jerseyans."

"Voting must be easy, convenient and accessible; our democracy depends on participation of the people. However, the current system makes it difficult for the people to exercise their constitutional right to vote. Heading to the polls on Election Day may require voters to take off work on a weekday, find care for their children or demand hours of their time. It shouldn't be this hard to cast a ballot," said Assembly sponsors Andrew Zwicker, Joseph Danielsens, and Verlina Reynolds-Jackson. "New Jersey must join the ranks of two dozen other states that allow in-person early voting, giving voters more opportunities to cast their ballots at their convenience. More people voting strengthens our democracy."

"This is a big day for democracy in New Jersey. While state after state across the country is pushing Jim Crow-like voter suppression laws, New Jersey is proactively taking pro-democracy steps to expand access to voting for all of its residents, including Black and other communities of color," said Ryan Haygood, President and CEO of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice. "Early in-person voting will make voting more accessible, including for Black voters who will now be able to participate in the Souls to the Polls tradition of voting on Sunday after church. With laws like this, New Jersey is on its way to becoming a model of an inclusive democracy. We are grateful to legislators and the Governor for making this legislation a reality and look forward to working with them to strengthen our democracy even more."

"As other states attempt to rollback voting rights and restrict access to the ballot, New Jersey is once again proving that we are a national leader in defending democracy," said Nancy Hedinger, President of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey. "We applaud the Governor and Legislature for their recognition that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to voting and that our democracy works better when there are multiple options to participate making the ballot accessible for all."

S3203 allows registered voters to vote using machines at polling places before the day of certain primary and general elections in New Jersey. In-person early voting will enable a registered voter to vote at a designated polling place before the day of an election using optical-scan voting machines that read hand-marked paper ballots or other voting machines that produce a voter-verifiable paper ballot. Designated polling places must be open for early voting on Monday through Saturday from at least 10 AM to 8 PM, and on Sunday from at least 10 AM to 6 PM.

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