



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

April 29, 2019

Commissioners of Elections
Executive Office
32 – 42 Broadway, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10004

Dear Commissioners:

We are living in an era of unprecedented civic and political engagement, and we must do everything in our power to support this growing spirit of activism and involvement. We witnessed this phenomenon in the November 2018 midterm elections, when New Yorkers turned out to vote in remarkable numbers. Unfortunately, the polls were not ready to meet this challenge. Instead voters experienced broken equipment and long lines. Many waited in the rain for hours to vote, while others who couldn't wait were unable to cast their vote at all. This shameful failure cannot be allowed to happen again, and thanks to reform in Albany, it doesn't have to.

The State Legislature and the Governor recently secured landmark legislation establishing early voting in New York. Early voting will allow New Yorkers more flexibility to vote during the hours and days that work for them – easing lines at the polls, encouraging more New Yorkers to vote, and making it easier to cast a ballot. It is vital that early voting be accessible to all New Yorkers, and that demands a plan that brings early voting to each of our communities. New Yorkers need to be able to vote in their neighborhoods, not at a handful of inconvenient sites in each borough.

To make early voting on this scale possible, our Executive Budget is providing \$75M for early voting in three elections in FY20. This funding will enable the Board of Elections to administer voting at 100 locations starting with the November 2019 general election, with locations equitably and accessibly distributed throughout the five boroughs. Countless schools, NYCHA facilities, libraries, recreation centers, and senior centers have been used as Election Day poll locations in recent elections. My administration and each of our agencies stand ready to work with you to identify and secure facilities that can accommodate early voting and ensure access for all New Yorkers.

With so much at stake, it is critical that we make every effort to avoid the mistakes of the past and ensure that early voting is a success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill de Blasio".

Bill de Blasio
Mayor