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April 19, 2023

TO: Robert C. Carroll Brad Hoylman-Sigal
LOB 557 LOB 310
Albany, N.Y. 12248 Albany, N.Y. 12247

And all members of the New York State Legislature

RE: Letter of support: S 660 and S 2562; A 274 and A 330
Lower the voting age to 16 for NYC Municipal Elections

Honorable Robert C. Carroll and Brad Hoylman-Sigal:

I am offering this letter as a letter of support for seeing passage of Assembly Bills A 274 and A 330 (Carroll) as well as New York State Senate Bills S 660 and S 2562 (Hoylman-Sigal). Passage of this legislation, when signed off on by Governor Hochul, would allow for 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in New York City municipal elections. Our new generation of civic stakeholders in New York City would join the ranks of voters of comparable age on the international stage (e.g., Australia, Austria, Argentina Ecuador, Scotland, Wales) and in cities in the state of Maryland (e.g., Takoma Park and Hyattsville). This would also allow our elected representatives to no longer beg the question, of why 16- and 17-year-old stakeholders have been enfranchised for years in other cities, with positive electoral outcomes resulting, while this is still not the case in the great city of New York.

I have served in New York City as a youth services manager, and teen empowerment advocate, since December of 1984. I began my career in Washington Heights (the Uptown Dreamers) and expanded my scope of advocacy beginning in 2007 to include the entire city of New York. I was a lead coordinator for the Teens on Community Boards campaign, which came to be passed in New York State in 2014. Working in partnership with 35 youth services and civic organizations, as well as with City Councilman Mark Levine and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, we saw a transformation on the floor of many Community Boards where capable young civic actors joined forces with experienced Board members to broaden the scope of civic participation and enrich the prospects for intergenerational understanding. By granting the right of local

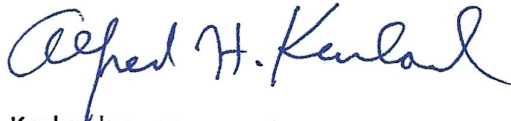
participation in the political process to 16- and 17-year-old municipal stakeholders, we would capture their interest and participation while they are still in high school, while involved in civic education, as well as with social justice advocacy in their neighborhoods and the City of New York.

In cities across the globe, and in Maryland, inclusion of newly enfranchised voters at age 16 resulted in higher engagement not only in initial elections (first time voting), but also in subsequent elections.

While I was still in my teen years (circa the 1960's), one of my role models, then U.S. Senator Robert F. Kennedy, spoke to a college audience in Cape town, South Africa, where he declared, "it is time to discard the outworn attitudes and slogans directed at the young, and rather to look to the young as leaders in our rapidly changing world.". His words have been echoed by Representative Nancy Pelosi, who signed on to the national legislation for lowering the voting age, with the following words: "I am in favor of lowering the voting age to 16. Lowering the voting age to 16 would help to drive a higher level of awareness and turnout."

Thank you for your consideration and support for this initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alfred H. Kurland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alfred" being the most prominent part.

Alfred H. Kurland

Cc: Council member Gale A. Brewer



Administrative Offices: 345 East 102nd Street, New York, NY 10029 Phone: (212) 289-8030 Fax: (212) 289-8093

April 28, 2023

Scan-Harbor

King Towers Community Center

2 west 115 Street New York, NY 10026

Good Days, My name is Iesha K. Lewis, I am a community Program Leader and I strongly urge New York State Legislation to support lowering the age for voters to 16 for New York elections.

The future is our youth leaders in our communities. You may think youth voices won't make a difference but adding up every individual who believes can turn into millions of supporters. Being aware of what is going on in the current political climate is crucial to the way you live your life, whether you realize it or not. Some people choose not to vote because they feel they don't have the proper background or enough information on exactly what is happening, others may figure they can wait until they're older to figure it out. However, that thinking can prevent progress. Even if you feel that you don't need change to occur, not casting your vote may lead to change.

"With the passage of this legislation (NY Senate, Holyman-S-660 and S562; NY State Assembly, Carroll – A274 and A230) amendments to both NY State Election Law and the NY State Constitution would create a pathway for encouraging electoral participant while 16-17 year olds are still in high School."

I have been serving as a Program Director for the youth for 7 years, as I continue to work and serve my community I've learned the youth has so much impact on their communities and much of the youth have an understanding of what they look forward to in the future and what it takes to get there, 1 major way to help empower the youth is having the opportunity to vote. The youth deserves a choice to vote, for they will need examples of what it takes to lead as they grow into Leaders of the future, our future.

As the next generation of this country, we have a responsibility to show up and vote. Young people have the smallest turnout when it comes to voting, but we can change that. What you may consider irrelevant or unnecessary now could end up having a bigger impact on your future than you would think. Creating a passage for our youth to vote and become active in the elections could change a life.

Thank you,

Iesha k. Lewis

Program Director

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(917)982-6778

MARIA A. LUNA

DEMOCRATIC DISTRICT LEADER AND STATE COMMITTEE MEMBER
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March 24, 2023

Hon. NYS Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal
Legislative Office Building
198 State Street, Room 310
Albany, NY 12210

Hon. Hoylman-Sigal,

My name is Maria A. Luna. As a longtime advocate and elected representative, I am strongly urging passage on New York State Legislation in support of lowering the voting age to 16 for New York City municipal elections.

With the passage of this legislation (NY Senate, Hoylman -S660 and S2562; NY State Assembly, Carroll - A274 and A230), amendments to both NY State Election Law and the NY State Constitution would create a pathway for encouraging electoral participation while 16- and 17-year-olds are still in high school.

Research derived from other cities, such as Takoma Park, Maryland, have shown that where the voting age has been lowered to age 16, this cohort of voters initially vote, and continue to vote, at up to four times the rate as those who register to vote at age 18 or older. In these times of declining electoral participation, inclusion of younger voters would bring energy to the voting process and instill the habit of participation at a crucially important stage in young people's lives.

I have served as a civic leader for decades, including that of being a Democratic Party District Leader and State Committee Member, and a member and officer for Community Board #12 in Manhattan, current active member of its Youth Services and Education Committee. I have also served as Board member and gate keeper for youth services organizations such as Southern Heights, the Ivy League Uptown W.I.N.S., and the Washington Heights Armory P.A.L. I have observed through witness and testimony that when students, as young as age 16, are given the opportunities, and presented with the challenge, or serving our communities and New York City, that they thrive personally and make valuable contributions to the common good.

My findings have been validated by House membership at the federal level. Congress person Grace Meng has introduced legislation to lower the voting age to 16 in national elections. Congress person Ayanna Pressley has introduced an amendment to the For the People Act (HR 1) also calling for lowering the voting age to 16. This is supported for former House speaker Nancy Pelosi and has been signed on to by 125 House Democrats.

Let us expand upon the already valuable work done by teens at the grassroots organizing level through environmental, gun control and social justice efforts and create an electoral right of passage for our youngest generation of public citizens.

Respectfully,



cc: Hon. Cordell Cleare, NYS Senator, 30th SD
Hon. Robert Jackson, NYS Senator 31st SD
Hon. Inez E. Dickens, NYS Assembly, 70th AD
Hon. Alfred E. Taylor, NYS Assembly, 71st AD
Hon. Manny de los Santos, NYS Assembly, 72nd AD
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, NYC Council, 6th CD
Hon. Shaun Abreu, NYC Council, 7th CD
Hon. Carmen de la Rosa, NYC Council, 10th CD
Andrew Wilkes, Generation Citizen, Chief Advocacy and Policy Officer
Alfred Kurland, Vote 16! NYC Volunteer Coordinator

BLANCA BATTINO

Former Principal in District 6 - Washington Heights, NY
Educator and Community Advocate, bbattino@optonline.net

April 24, 2023

Honorable Brad Hoylman-Sigal
NY State Senate
Legislative Office Building, Rm 310
Albany, New York 12247

Honorable Robert C. Carroll
NY State Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Rm 557
Albany, NY 12247

Re: *NY State Senate Bill S660; NY State Senate Bill S2562; NY State Assembly Bill A274; NY State Assembly Bill A230*

Dear Senator Hoylman-Sigal and Assemblyman Carroll:

I write today to emphasize the importance of the above-referenced legislation in promoting civic engagement and establishing habits of continued participation in the democratic process.

I have had the privilege of working in education for over 40 years. During these years I have witnessed 16-year-olds participating in school reform, governance committees, youth councils, and community empowerment initiatives. By age 16, these students demonstrate reliable levels of competence in metacognition understanding of decision-making, problem-solving, sound choice and commitment to a plan of action. They manifest civic maturity and competencies in their recommendations of solutions to school, community and world issues.

Lowering the current voting age to 16 would also strengthen civic courses and encourage high schools to design and implement quality civics educational programs. This curriculum change promotes the engagement of 16-year-olds in our election process and ensures a selection of lawmakers that addresses their

political priorities. As we have seen from other places that have lowered the voting age, doing so increases civic participation and voter turnout.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance that this legislation be passed and amendments to both NY State Election Law and the NY State Constitution take place. We need to join the cities and countries that have demonstrated positive outcomes from lowering the voting age to 16.

Sincerely,

Blanca Battino

Educator and Community Advocate

Officers

2/6/23

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To: Hon. Brad Hoylman-Sigal, State Senator (47 S.D.)

I am writing this letter in strong support for your legislation, (S 660) which will lower the voting age in NYC municipal elections to 16 years of age.

I am the Founder and President of the Council for Unity. Since 1975 the Council has been teaching leadership, self-expression, mediation, conflict resolution and advocacy. Our mission is to empower students and groups with the tools necessary to promote unity, safety and empowerment in schools, communities, law enforcement agencies and correctional facilities. See www.councilforunity.org.

Our staff, as youth empowerment and civic advocacy trainers, has observed firsthand the unique talents and essential contributions of young people in their roles as civic and politically engaged stakeholders. We are confident that 16- and 17-year-old citizens would bring fresh perspectives on important local issues, and a valuable voice in municipal affairs. We strongly urge the NYS Legislature to pass S 660, which would fully enfranchise these young voters.

I thank you for your commitment and leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Robert J. De Sena
Founder & President
Council for Unity

Fe Florimon, MPA

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fe.florimon@jjay.cuny.edu

March 11, 2023

Hon. Brad Hoylman-Sigal,
Legislative Office Building
198 State Street-Room 310
Albany, NY 12210

RE: Pending Legislation S 660
Youth Voting Age 16-17 years olds

Dear Senator Hoylman-Sigal,

As an ardent advocate of education and youth civic engagement, on behalf of my community partners, colleagues and friends from the large community of Washington Heights and Inwood, I am writing to express my absolute support for the pending legislation (S 660).

I am the Founder/President of the *Community with Services Faith Hope & Charity, Inc.*, and the *Chair of the Youth and Education Committee of the Community Board 12 Manhattan* for over a decade. In all my community roles along the members of my committee and community partners (School District 6, CBOs, CEC6, and Alfred Kurland, Author of *"The Soul of Adolescence Aligns with the Heart of Democracy"*- just to mention a few), we have proudly and consistently supported youth civic engagement at all levels. In fact, we collectively and diligently advocated for the passing of the NYS legislation-S 4142, which you co-sponsored. Thanks to this legislation young people, (16-17-year-olds) are allowed to join the city's community boards and vote on important matters for their communities.

We trust that the passing of your pending Legislation S 660- Youth Voting Age 16- and 17-year-old citizens would unleash the power of positive outcome in our communities. The approval of this legislation would create great opportunities for young people's civil engagements; and of course, the potential for an initial lab for those young people who want their voice to be heard and wish to become leaders. Therefore, we urge the NYS Legislatures to pass S 660 without hesitation to empower the voice and commitment of our young generation of future voters and leaders.

Please accept our utmost and collective appreciation for your leadership and commitment towards the pending legislation S 660. *Yes, We Can!*

Sincerely,

Fe Florimon, MPA

CSFHC, Founder & President
CB12M- Youth and Education Committee, Chair