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Progressive Leaders Pressuring Cuomo and Albany on Early Voting



A sign at a Manhattan rally to support early voting.
(Robert Lewis / WNYC News)

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Progressive activists and some top local Democrats are calling on Governor Andrew Cuomo and state lawmakers to finally pass an **early voting measure** as part of the budget leaders are hammering out behind closed doors.

More than three dozen other states already allow early voting.

Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney and other elected officials spoke at a rally Sunday in favor of such a measure.

"Impeding the right to vote is not just anti-democratic, it is un-American," Schneiderman said.



A rally in Foley Square to support early voting. New York is one of about a dozen states that doesn't have such a provision. (Robert Lewis/WNYC News)

Na'ilah Amaru now lives in Brooklyn after moving around the country and serving in the Army overseas. She said it makes no sense that she had early voting living in the deep South but not in supposedly "progressive" New York.

"I had an easier time voting overseas as a service member," Amaru said.

Cuomo's budget proposal calls for funding up to 12 days of early voting. The state Assembly's version only allows for eight days of early voting. The Republican-controlled state Senate excludes early voting entirely.

Some Republicans have questioned the cost to taxpayers and if early voting would actually increase participation rates.

A state budget is due at the end of this month.

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