

## Common Cause Wants Cuomo to Say 'No' To Lever Voting Machines

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Common Cause says Gov. Andrew Cuomo needs to get his veto pen ready to stop the city from bringing back its old-school lever voting machines for this year's elections.

Both houses of the state Legislature are working on bills to allow the city's Board of Elections to delay a runoff in the mayoral primary and allow the city to use the lever machines.

The Senate version, sponsored by Republican Sen. Marty Golden of Brooklyn, would allow New York City to use lever machines in all non-federal elections. It would delay the runoff to three weeks after the election.

The Assembly version, sponsored by Democratic Sen. Michael Cusick of Staten Island, would only allow use of the antiquated machines for the runoff. The delay of the runoff would be the same as Golden's bill.

Common Cause refers to Cusick's legislation as "the less of two evils." Most good government groups oppose the use of lever machines at all and say the BOE should get its act together.

"It would be both a waste of tax payer money and an epic failure of government if after all our efforts to bring New York City's elections into the 21st century we reverted back to the 19th century for fear of progress," Common Cause/NY Executive Director Susan Lerner said in a statement.

"The new technology is perfectly up to the task of administering the runoff as experts have acknowledged," Lerner continued. "It is the Board's continued unwillingness to get up to speed with modern technology which is truly at issue. Common Cause/NY urges the two houses of the

Legislature to drop the lever machines out of these two bills and agree to move the run-off date back."

Common Cause's release says that lever machines are "inadequate" for runoff elections because:

They have 28,000 moving parts and break down constantly, with replacement parts limited, making them unreliable

They cannot be audited which is a violation of the spirit of Help America Vote Act (HAVA)

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