



For Immediate Release
December 24, 2020

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LDF Issues Statement on Governor Cuomo Signing Automatic Voter Registration Bill into Law

This week, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signed an Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) bill into law. Going into effect in 2023, AVR will enable eligible voters to be automatically registered when interacting with a variety of state and local agencies. New York becomes the 19th state plus the District of Columbia to enact AVR.

In response to the bill signing, Janai Nelson, Associate Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc. (LDF), issued the following statement:

“Automatic Voter Registration is one of many long-overdue policy improvements to our electoral process that makes voting easier and more accessible to all communities. Once the law goes into effect in New York, over one million eligible voters will be added to the voter rolls, helping to strengthen our democracy and remove barriers to voter engagement.

“For 80 years, LDF has been at the forefront in the struggle to secure, preserve, and expand voting rights for Black Americans. This includes policies like AVR, early voting, and the expansion of mail-in voting that promote full and equitable participation in our democracy. LDF will continue to fight for these and other electoral improvements at the federal and state levels, especially in the South, where the majority of Black people reside and where they consistently face voter suppression tactics that prevent access to the ballot box.”

According to the Brennan Center, AVR increased registration rates between nine and 94% in states that currently have the law in place. In New York, the agencies covered by the new law include the Department of Motor Vehicles; the Department of Health; the Department of Labor; the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities; the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance; county and city Departments of Social Services, and the New York City Housing Authority.

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization. LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Follow LDF on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).