

Hon Zellnor Myrie
NY State Senate
Albany NY
Via Email to Jacquet@NYSenate.gov

3 Whippletree Rd
Fairport NY 134450
August 1, 2021

Re: New York State Senate Committee on Elections "To Review Elections Administration and Voting Rights in Rochester and Western NY."

Members of the Committee:

I am writing you concerning the unsolicited ballots that my wife and I received at our home addressing last year's election cycle. From news reports, we were aware that we would automatically receive ballots through the mail as an emergency measure during the Covid outbreak. Though both of us were at least 70 years old, we had no hesitation about visiting our normal polling place to vote in person. Fairport, at the time had not experienced widespread outbreaks of Covid and we were in the habit of routinely wearing masks and carrying hand sanitizer when in public places.

So, when the ballots came through the mail to each of us on the same day, we opened them and gave them a quick review before discarding them. They appeared to be genuine. About a week later to our dismay, we each received a SECOND set of the same ballots. Again they appeared to me genuine. I was really incensed because I am very familiar with abuses in the voting system. There are many ways that our elections can be scammed by overzealous types wishing to control the outcome. And, during the last cycle the Presidential, our Monroe Co. and our State elections were all expected to be close with large turnouts because of the unpopularity of the former president at the top of the Republican ticket.

When I go to my local polling station, I have the assurance that there will be no electioneering within 200 ft of the premises. I am also assured my vote will be handled properly there because representatives of both major parties are usually on the premises to ensure rules of fair play are enforced. I am also convinced that the voting machines will be properly tabulated after my vote is cast. They are tools that I have seen many times before so I am comfortable with them. I am also required to sign a signature card and the election volunteer attempts to compare my signature to a known one to ensure that I am who I say I am. Years ago, I had a business association with one of the two major party election commissioners for Monroe Co so I knew of things that were done behind the scene to ensure honest and fair elections. In short, the system has earned my trust. Voting is essential in a democracy. I have often split my vote in the past among the three parties running candidates. I have been willing to invest the time to research the best candidates.

My faith in our local election process has been severely shaken because of the fact that my wife and I both received more than one unsolicited ballot. There is no obvious reason why we received more than one ballot. Both of us have resided at the same address for twelve years. How many others received more than one ballot? If I had filled out both of them and mailed them back, would have anyone bothered to check if I had voted twice by mail? Or even a third time by going to the polling place? Multiple ballots or unsolicited ballots can easily be exploited by the unscrupulous with little fear of being caught. Any idiot who keeps up with political news knows that ballot harvesting has likely

occurred in other jurisdictions which has created a suspicious outcome.

So I ask myself, was this an innocent mistake on the part of the bureaucracy? Perhaps. If not, then is it likely this could have been caused by a person or persons at a low level in State or County government? Or was this a result of high level corruption? How widespread was it? Was this cleverly targeted to a swing district like mine? Either way, I have lost a lot of trust in the system. Should I continue to invest my time educating myself under this cloud of impropriety? And what about those who advocate for HR 1 in the US Congress? Why should we legislate against requiring photo ID at the time of voting? I still have to show photo ID when I buy beer at Wegmans. Isn't the preservation of the legitimacy of our elections at least as important as protecting our youth from the premature use of alcohol?

How was this allowed to happen? What can the Committee do to restore my trust? I am not a member of any advocacy group for election reform. I found out about this issue from Sen. Brouk's website.

Sincerely,

Robert P Barton