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News Release

New York City Could Make History: Considering Lowering the Voting Age to Sixteen

New York City, June 8, 2005: New York City could become the first American city to lower its voting age to sixteen after Councilwoman Gale Brewer introduces her bill to lower the municipal voting age from 18 to 16 on Wednesday.

Originally proposed by the Future Voters of America Party, this measure is sponsored by Councilwoman Gale Brewer and will be introduced on June 8, 2005, at 1 p.m. at City Hall. Before the city council meeting, Councilwoman Brewer, FVAP and the National Youth Rights Association will hold a news conference on the front steps of city hall to introduce the issue. The news conference is scheduled to begin at 11:30 am.

Among those expected to be in attendance at the news conference is New York Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, as well as Alex Koroknay-Palicz, NYRA's national President.

NYRA-NYC endorses this legislation because the time is right for this historic breakthrough. At least 80% of high school students work before graduation. They pay taxes but have no say where those tax dollars go. They have a unique perspective on particular issues, including education, but have no input over crucial policy decisions. NYRA also believes there is substantial evidence to suggest lowering the voting age will increase voter turnout.

"Every election the media and politicians complain that more young people don't come out and vote," says NYRA-NYC President Ana Hevesi. "why then do we stop thousands of young people under 18 from voting when they really want to?"

NYRA-NYC encourages New York to join a growing worldwide movement to lower the voting age. Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom are all considering a lower voting age. In America, legislation to lower the voting age has been introduced in several states and communities. Now New York can become the first city to adopt a voting age of sixteen.

About NYRA

NYRA, founded in 1998, is a Washington D.C. based 501(c)(3) non-profit. Its mission is to promote awareness of the legal and civil rights of young people in the United States. NYRA has over 5,000 members and has been featured on CNN, Fox News, PBS, NPR, and in the New York Times, USA Today, Boston Globe, LA Times, Christian Science Monitor, Baltimore Sun and numerous other publications.

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