

Immigration Reform Champion Outraged at New Non-Citizen Voter Law in New York

Tony Suarez, chief operating officer for the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference and a champion for immigration reform, said Monday he is outraged at the new law implemented by New York City Mayor Eric Adams that will allow more than 800,000 non-citizens and “Dreamers” in New York City to have access to the ballot box and could vote in municipal elections as early as 2023.

“As someone who has advocated for immigration reform for years, this is not the type of solution we have been seeking,” Suarez told Charisma News. “I think this sets us back even further. Speaking on behalf of dreamers, I don’t think this is what they wanted, either. What we’ve wanted was a legal pathway toward citizenship for those who aren’t criminals and pledge allegiance to the United States.

“Actions like this show that Democrats have no interest in fixing our broken immigration system.”

Opponents have vowed to challenge the new law, which the City Council approved a month ago. Unless a judge halts its implementation, New York City is the first major U.S. city to grant widespread municipal voting rights to noncitizens.

More than a dozen communities across the U.S. already allow noncitizens to cast ballots in local elections, including 11 towns in Maryland and two in Vermont.

“That’s news to me,” Suarez says. I just don’t know anyone that would support anything like this. Speaking for us who have lobbied for immigration reform, I think it’s an outrage.

“This just shows that the Democrats are scared silly of the Republicans taking elections back later this year. Like 2020, they’ll do anything to stuff the ballot boxes. This is just one more action by the Democratic party to manipulate elections in their favor.”

Noncitizens still wouldn’t be able to vote for president or members of Congress in federal races, or in the state elections that pick the governor, judges and legislators, but it could be a huge step toward that.

The Board of Elections must now begin drawing an implementation plan by July, including voter registration rules and provisions that would create separate ballots for municipal races to prevent noncitizens from casting ballots in federal and state contests.

It’s a watershed moment for the nation’s most populous city, where legally documented, voting-age noncitizens comprise nearly one in nine of the city’s 7 million voting-age inhabitants. The movement to win voting rights for noncitizens prevailed after numerous setbacks.

The measure would allow noncitizens who have been lawful permanent residents of the city for at least 30 days, as well as those authorized to work in the U.S., including “Dreamers,” to help select the city’s mayor, city council members, borough presidents, comptroller and public advocate.

“Dreamers” are young immigrants brought to the U.S. illegally as children who would benefit from the never-passed DREAM Act or the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which allows them to remain in the country if they meet certain criteria.

The first elections in which noncitizens would be allowed to vote are in 2023. {eo}

Follow breaking news like this on our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.