



News Release

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New York State Board of Elections Announces New Democratic Commissioner Appointments

ALBANY, N.Y. (02/08/2024) – At its Tuesday, February 6th meeting, the New York State Board of Elections announced the appointment of two new Commissioners, election law expert and former New York City Council Member Henry Berger and former Chief Clerk to the Nassau County Board of Elections, Essma Bagnuola.

Henry Berger was appointed as Co-Chair to the Board of Elections on December 21, 2023, at the recommendation of the New York State Senate and Assembly’s Democratic Legislative Leadership. Commissioner Berger has worked as an election law attorney and public policy expert for more than three decades. Notable prior positions include serving as a member of the New York City Council and Special Counsel and Advisor to Mayor Bill de Blasio. More recently, Commissioner Berger has used his expertise as a private practice attorney specializing in election law and campaign finance to offer insights on major state policy changes.

“Over the last five years, New York State has implemented numerous statutory changes to make elections more accessible to voters and candidates. I am proud to have provided support to several reforms including the passage of Automatic Voter Registration and the creation of a statewide Public Campaign Finance program. As Co-Chair to the Board of Elections, I will ensure that these policies, and any new statutory changes, are implemented with a focus on encouraging voter participation and instilling confidence in the democratic process,” said Commissioner Berger.

Essma Bagnuola was appointed as Commissioner of the Board on January 30, 2024, at the recommendation of the Chairman of the State Democratic Committee. Commissioner Bagnuola brings to the State Board nearly two decades of administering and overseeing state, local and federal elections. As a senior election official and Chief Clerk of the Nassau County Board of Elections, Commissioner Bagnuola oversaw all aspects of the Board’s day-to-day operations and conduct of elections. This included the petition process and candidate certification; ballot preparation and quality control; maintenance and testing of the county’s 1,200 voting machines; and the certification of election results.

“During my tenure with the Nassau County Board of Elections, I oversaw the core functions of election administration. From the establishment of procedures for major voting changes, to the introduction of new election technology, my position as Chief Clerk gave me a unique perspective on the challenges of running elections in a county with more than one million voters. This experience will be invaluable in my new role as Commissioner, and I look forward to assisting in the implementation of new legislative changes before the Board,” said Commissioner Essma Bagnuola.

If you have any questions regarding this press release please contact Kathleen McGrath or Jennifer Wilson at the State Board of Elections at (518) 474-1953 or by email at INFO@elections.ny.gov.

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