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NYPIRG REACTS TO FINAL COUNT IN CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 22 RACE

STUNNING FAILURES IN ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATION MUST BE INVESTIGATED AND REFORMS ADVANCED

VOTER CONFIDENCE IN NEW YORK WILL DEPEND ON A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION AND LEGISLATIVE REFORMS

(Albany, N.Y.) The New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) today called for a statewide investigation into New York's system of election administration. The elections failures identified in the judicial review of the race for Representative of CD-22 cover multiple counties and not only resulted in a three-month delay in the result, but more importantly disenfranchised voters. Moreover, these findings come on the heels of other voting problems in other parts of the state during the primary and general elections.

It's clear that New York's archaic system of patronage controlled local Boards of Elections has once again failed voters. Given the number of counties involved and the sloppiness and incompetence of elections administrators in several jurisdictions, New Yorkers deserve a thorough review and the knowledge that the state's leaders are taking these problems seriously.

We call on the Legislature to hold public hearings and for the state Comptroller and -- if appropriate the state Attorney General -- to audit *all* county boards of elections to ensure that shortcomings and failures are identified and submitted to the Legislature for further action. An investigation and correct actions must be taken, and taken quickly.

Media outlets have reported that in the CD-22 race:

- **Oneida** County failed to count votes cast by New Yorkers who had registered through the Department of Motor Vehicles. BOE staff used sticky notes to keep track of the reasons why Brindisi and Tenney disputed dozens of ballots. When the judge asked to review those ballots in his court, the election commissioners admitted that some of the sticky notes had fallen off ballots. Oneida County election commissioners admitted they did not follow New York election law when they rejected about 1,500 affidavit ballots.
- **Oswego** County used sticky notes to track disputed ballots. Oswego County election officials admitted that they failed to follow state election law with disputed absentee ballots.
- **Herkimer** County election officials admitted that they had miscalculated the vote tally for CD-22.
- **Chenango** County discovered 55 uncounted ballots and found 12 ballots stuffed in a drawer.
- **Madison** County lost track of disputed ballots.
- **Cortland** County did not tell the candidates about rejected ballots.
- **Broome** County used a numbering system that did not work. A Broome County deputy elections commissioner testified about several violations of election law related to the counting of absentee and affidavit ballots.