



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

Senate Passes Lavalle Bill to Curb Cheating on Academic Papers

KENNETH P. LAVALLE April 29, 2013

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The New York State Senate today passed a bill to prevent students from cheating by prohibiting the sale or purchase of dissertations, term papers, and similar academic documents online. The legislation (S2405), sponsored by Senator Kenneth LaValle (R-C-I, Port Jefferson), would prevent academic fraud by discouraging Internet-based services from selling educational papers to students.

“There have always been students who have found ways to cheat on exams or to buy term papers,” Senator LaValle, Chairman of the Higher Education Committee, said. “The Internet has made academic dishonesty considerably easier and faster. It is simpler than ever before to find other people's work on a topic and pass it off as one's own with a simple copy-and-paste. Current New York State law bans the sale or purchase of dissertations and term papers but does not specifically indicate that papers obtained over the Internet or other electronic media are covered under the ban. This legislation would remove any ambiguity and would subject students or others providing such unlawful assistance to prosecution.”

Most academic institutions have plagiarism policies in place whereby students who engage in such activity are punished. However, there is not currently a New York State law that deters online entities from offering educational papers for sale.

This bill extends the current prohibition against the sale or purchase of “written” term papers and other documents provided for sale or purchase by including papers purchased through electronic media, such as the Internet. Students would still be able to access research information online, but sale or purchase of term papers, theses, or dissertations would be a violation punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.