



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Toby Ann Stavisky

Senator Stavisky and Assemblyman Braunstein Introduce Senate Bill S6570 to Identify Sea of Japan and East Sea in Textbooks

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Flushing, NY—Today Senator Toby Ann Stavisky (D-Flushing) and Assemblyman Edward Braunstein (D-Bayside) introduced Senate bill S6570 that would require all new textbooks used in New York State to refer to the body of water that separates the Japanese archipelago from the Asian mainland as the East Sea as well as the Sea of Japan.

Korean advocates have lobbied for decades for the change, charging that the name is unjust because it was widely established in a 1929 publication of the "Limits of the Oceans and the Seas" by the International Hydrographic Organization, released while Korea was under Japanese occupation. The Japanese government believes the name is valid because it is the standard term of reference used by nearly all foreign governments.

In the United States, the Virginia state legislature responded to the concerns of Korean-American citizens and passed a bill on February 6 mandating that all new textbooks use both terms for the body of water. The bill is expected to be signed into law by Governor Terry McAuliffe.

Korean-Americans in New York have also been pressing for similar legislation. In 2012, Senator Stavisky asked that the New York City Department of Education begin using books that included both names. They did not respond to her request.

“It is often said that history is written by the victors. In this case, the widely known name for a body of water is a constant reminder for Koreans worldwide of an era of oppression, occupation and violence. Understanding the historical and political implications of this conflict and acknowledging the East Sea as well as the Sea of Japan is an important lesson for New York students as they learn to be conscientious global citizens. I represent over 150,000 Asian-Americans in the most diverse Senate district in the state and this bill is another step towards cultivating more mutual cultural understanding and respect,” said **Senator Toby Ann Stavisky (D-Flushing.)**

“Historically, this body of water has been referred to as both the East Sea and the Sea of Japan. Therefore, it is unfair to Koreans and our students to erroneously refer to it solely as the Sea of Japan. This bill would ensure that future generations of New Yorkers are accurately educated on this issue. The bill will also take into account the sensitivities of Koreans regarding Japan’s actions during the Japanese Imperial Period,” said **Assemblyman Edward C. Braunstein (D-Bayside.)**