



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

Senator Martins Announces Senate Passage of Legislation Reforming the Board of Regents Selection Process

JACK M. MARTINS March 19, 2014

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New, More Equitable Process Would Distribute Appointments Among Governor, Senate and Assembly

Senator Jack Martins (R-Mineola) announced that the New York Senate recently passed legislation to dramatically reform the selection process for the state Board of Regents to better reflect the population of the entire state. The legislation, of which Senator Martins is a sponsor, establishes a more equitable and balanced appointment process for the selection of the Board of Regents, who are charged with setting education policy in New York.

Under the legislation (S2031A), the appointment of the 17 Regents would take place as follows: eight to be chosen by the Governor; three by the Majority Leader of the Senate; three by the Speaker of the Assembly; one each by the Minority Leaders of the Senate and Assembly; and one appointment to be selected on a rotating basis by the Governor, Majority Leader and Speaker.

The existing selection of Regents requires confirmation by a majority vote of all 213 members of the Legislature, giving the Assembly's New York City-centric majority virtually unchecked control over the selection of Regents.

Recently, a joint legislative session to fill four regents vacancies demonstrated the flaws in the current process. In a controversial vote and over the objections of Senator Martins and his Senate Republican colleagues, educators, parents, and students across the state, the Assembly's majority reelected three Regents who were partly responsible for the disastrous implementation of Common Core.

"The recent Regents reappointment vote is the poster-child of how deeply flawed and dysfunctional the selection process is. Several incumbent Regents who were instrumental in the failed rollout of Common Core and made decisions to share our students' data without regard to their privacy rights were reappointed simply because the Assembly majority wanted them to be. This is a process which cries out for reform, and we need to change it so that there is greater accountability to parents and

students,” said Senator Martins.

The legislation makes the selection of regents more open and inclusive. It opens up Regents membership to more worthy candidates by giving appointment authority to the Governor and the majority and the minority leaders of the Senate and Assembly.