



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Senate Democrats Reject Republican 'Amazon' Amendment To Create Fairness On PACB

JOHN J. FLANAGAN February 26, 2019

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On the heels of running Amazon HQ2 and its 25,000 high-paying jobs out of the state, the New York State Senate Democratic Majority unanimously rejected a Republican proposal to restructure the voting procedure for the Public Authorities Control Board (PACB).

**Members of the Republican Conference** put an amendment on the floor to remove veto power on the PACB, an influence so outsized that Amazon decided to scrap its massive project in

Queens that would have been a boon for the entire tech industry in the state.

The Republican proposal, which was outright rejected by Democrats, would have required a majority vote by PACB appointees, instead of the unanimous vote currently required.

**“Every single Senate Democrat showed New Yorkers that they were not ready for prime time when they chased Amazon and its 25,000 jobs out of town, and today Democrats are reaffirming their ‘New York is closed for business’ stance by refusing to relinquish the very veto power that killed Amazon. The Republican Conference offered a common sense solution to create a more deliberative and fair process,” said Senate Republican Leader John J. Flanagan.**

“New York’s economic fate should not be placed in the hands of a sole individual seeking to advance a political agenda. We just lost 25,000 good paying jobs thanks to the PACB structure and a small opposition led by the Senate Democrats. We cannot afford to endanger future projects that will grow our economy and deliver much needed jobs that will benefit our entire state. As someone who has served on the PACB, I believe the time is now to update the voting rules before another Amazon is lost,” **said Senator James Seward.**

Amazon HQ2 received support from 70% of the public, according to a poll. Despite the large public embrace, Democratic Deputy Majority Leader Michael Gianaris rallied against the project, located in the Long Island City section of his district. He failed to even meet with Amazon representatives.

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins appointed him to the PACB, ultimately putting in his hands the veto power to kill 25,000 jobs, with an average salary of \$125,000 and over \$27 billion in tax revenue for the state.

After the Governor blasted the Gianaris PACB board pick in a radio interview, Senate Democrats replaced his nomination with another member of the same Queens political establishment, Senator Leroy Comrie.

The PACB will be reviewing plans for Belmont in Comrie's district.