



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

## Statement from Senator Borrello on the Governor's Veto of Legislation to Forgive Panama School District's NYSED Penalty

GEORGE M. BORRELLO November 12, 2020

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"I am deeply disappointed that Governor Cuomo has once again vetoed legislation ( [S.7034/A.8926](#)) which would have released the Panama Central School District from paying the remaining \$1.9 million of an unfair New York State Education Department penalty levied more than a decade ago. With our school districts in financial crisis due to the pandemic and the loss of state aid, the debt relief we were seeking for the district has never been more urgent.

“It is incomprehensible that the Governor has repeatedly vetoed this legislation that would erase a penalty that never should have been imposed. The original \$4.9 million fee, instituted because of an administrative error on the final cost report for a capital project, was an enormous financial blow to a small, struggling rural school district and its taxpayers. Crucial assistance was provided by my predecessor, Cathy Young, and Assemblyman Andy Goodell, in securing funds to help mitigate the negative impact. Yet, despite their efforts, this unresolved fine prevented a long-sought merger with the Clymer School District that would have been a great benefit to both students and taxpayers.

“No district should be put in this position, which is why I am co-sponsoring Senate Bill [4209](#), which would forgive all state school districts who have been burdened with oppressive fines for building aid administrative reporting errors. In these difficult economic times with schools facing devastating state aid cuts, these fines are unjustifiable.”

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