



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## During “Sunshine Week”, Senate Passes Deputy Leader Gianaris’ Legislation Making It Easier For People To Have Their Voices Heard By Government

MICHAEL GIANARIS March 17, 2021

| ISSUE: **SUNSHINE WEEK, PUBLIC HEARINGS, TRANSPARENCY, GOOD GOVERNMENT**



ALBANY – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris announced the state Senate passed his legislation ([S.155](#)), requiring state agencies to make the rulemaking process more accessible. The Senate takes up this legislation as part of “Sunshine Week,” an annual effort to advocate for greater transparency in government.

“The covid-19 pandemic taught us the crucial importance of transparency in government,” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “We should live up to our progressive ideals and make our government truly accessible to the people it serves.”

Senator Gianaris’ legislation creates a 3-year pilot program of six major state agencies - Education, Environmental Conservation, Health, Financial Services, Labor and Family Assistance – requiring these agencies to hold public hearings anytime they are petitioned by 125 residents. Several other states, including California, Arizona, Idaho, New Hampshire, Illinois, and Utah, have similar requirements for agencies to hold hearings. Additionally, Senator Gianaris’ bill requires these agencies to use innovative techniques to encourage more public participation.

The legislation is sponsored in the Assembly by Assembly Member Zohran Mamdani.

**Assembly Member Zohran K. Mamdani** said, “Allowing public hearings to be on evenings and weekends allows for more participation by working-class New Yorkers. Designating time for the public to question agency personnel creates more opportunities for transparency. Creating a program through which members of the public can demand a hearing reminds rule-makers that they are ultimately accountable to the people. These are all steps towards a that empowers each and every New Yorker to be a part of political processes that too often operate in the shadows. I am proud to sponsor this legislation, and continue fighting for that system.”

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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**2021-S155**

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- Introduced
  - - In Committee Assembly
    - In Committee Senate
  - - On Floor Calendar Assembly
    - On Floor Calendar Senate
  - - Passed Assembly
    - Passed Senate
  - Delivered to Governor
  - Signed By Governor
  -

Authorizes the use of innovative techniques to enhance public participation in the rule making process

December 21, 2020

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by Michael Gianaris

Do you support this bill?