



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

NEW YORK STATE SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION



Senator Toby Ann Stavisky
Chair



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STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY 12247

TOBY ANN STAVISKY
Senator, 16th District

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ETHICS AND INTERNAL GOVERNANCE
FINANCE
HEALTH
JUDICIARY
RACING, GAMING AND WAGERING

December 2020

Dear Senator Stewart-Cousins:

I am pleased to transmit the Annual Report of the Senate's Standing Committee on Higher Education for the 2020 Legislative Session. As Chairwoman, I am proud to continue to lead our efforts to address important matters under the committee's jurisdiction. The committee is committed to supporting New York's higher education sector, as well as its oversight of professions licensed or seeking licensure by the state education department.

During the 2020 session, the committee met virtually six times and reported twenty-seven bills. The Committee also held one hearing on how COVID-19 has impacted higher education this past year. In addition, the Committee participated in the Finance Committee budget hearings and reviewed 235 bills assigned to the committee.

I thank my colleagues who served on the Committee for their efforts and support of the work that was done in the committee this year, and I thank you for the continued support from the Majority Conference in the committee's operations.

Lastly, I want to recognize the years of service of the Ranking Minority Member, Senator Kenneth LaValle, who is retiring this year.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Toby Ann Stavisky". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Toby Ann Stavisky
Senator, 16th District

**2020 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT
NEW YORK STATE SENATE**

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Senator Toby Ann Stavisky, Chairwoman

Committee Members

Majority

Senator Neil D. Breslin
Senator James F. Gaughran
Senator Andrew S. Gounardes
Senator Robert Jackson Jr.
Senator Rachel May

Minority

Senator Kenneth P. LaValle
Ranking Member
Senator George A. Amedore
Senator Joseph E. Roach
Senator James L. Seward

Committee Staff

Jan Dorman – Director
Sabiel Chapnick – Legislative Director
Beth LaMountain – Clerk
Marilyn Dyer – Executive Assistant

COMMITTEE JURISDICTION AND OVERVIEW

The New York State Senate Standing Committee on Higher Education has legislative responsibilities for issues concerning the review and development of legislation addressing postsecondary education for New York State. This includes legislation dealing with the Board of Regents, as well as, more than 56 professions licensed by the State Education Department.

The committee's jurisdiction, therefore, covers a broad range of areas including maintaining the quality and affordability of New York's public, independent and proprietary institutions, continuing the state's long tradition of providing student financial aid programs, and providing institutional aid to all sectors of higher education. In addition, the committee plays a key role in program quality, access and opportunities for professional education, encourages academic and private sector cooperation, promotes research, and facilitates elementary and postsecondary partnerships. Furthermore, the committee is deeply involved with the process by which practitioners acquire, demonstrate and maintain professional skills. Another component of the committee's work is to consider change and expansion to the scope of practice of the state's professions licensed by the State Education Department (SED), as well as to consider the licensure of newly created professions.

During the 2020 Legislative Session, two hundred and thirty five bills were referred to the Committee for its review. Of these bills, twenty-seven were reported from the Committee. Sixteen were passed by the Senate, and six passed in both houses. Five of those bills were chaptered and one vetoed. This work was conducted through a series of six committee meetings. A list of all bills that were reported from the committee is provided at the end of this report.

In addition to regular meetings, the Committee held one hearing, where several administrative and student groups testified on how COVID-19 has impacted higher education.

COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

During the 2020 Session and the switch to virtual committee meetings because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Higher Education Committee held six meetings and one hearing. The committee passed two pieces of legislation in response to COVID-19. Bill S.8182 by Senator Hoylman, allows pharmacists to administer immunizations for COVID-19, once a vaccine is developed. This legislation passed both houses and became Chapter #110 of 2020. The second bill to pass through the committee and both houses was S.8623 by Senator Stavisky, which authorizes State Education Department to renew limited and professional permits for an additional twelve months due to the pandemic because testing vendors that provide licensing exams, have not been able to open testing centers or offer alternative online opportunities. This bill was Chapter #182 in 2020.

The committee also reported, S.4549 by Senator Parker which provides for the development of education opportunity centers (EOCs) that would provide programs and services to educationally and economically challenged communities. This bill is Chapter #319 in 2020.

On July 28, 2020, the committee heard testimony from several administrative and student groups at a joint hearing with the Assembly Higher Education Committee on *How COVID-19 Has Impacted Higher Education*. The committee heard testimony about the effects of the pandemic on the students and the institutions, the decisions to move to distance learning and the effects the pandemic is having on the student's educational instruction, mental health and the financial burdens.

TWO HOUSE BILLS

In 2020, six bills of the two hundred and thirty five bills referred to the Standing Committee on Higher Education passed both houses of the Legislature. Of these bills, the Governor has signed five and one was vetoed by the Governor.

| Bill | Sponsor | Summary | Action |
|-------------|--------------------|--|----------------------|
| S4549 | PARKER -- | Codifies state university of New York educational opportunity centers which provide an integrated system of education, vocational training and student support services targeted to higher education access and the development of a quality workforce which supports the economic development of New York's distressed communities. | SIGNED, CHAPTER #319 |
| S7117 | SANDERS -- | Relates to the minimum cumulative grade point average admission requirement for graduate-level teacher and educational leader programs; removes the minimum 3.0 or higher requirement. | VETOED, MEMO #75 |
| S7986A | STAVISKY -- | Relates to continuing education for professional engineers, land surveyors and professional geologists; repeals section 7212 of the education law relating to mandatory continuing education for land surveyors. | SIGNED, CHAPTER #260 |
| S8182A | HOYLMAN -- | Authorizes licensed pharmacists to administer a vaccine for COVID-19 approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research vaccine product approval process. | SIGNED, CHAPTER #110 |
| S8632 | STAVISKY -- | Relates to permitting the education department to renew limited and provisional permits for an additional twelve months. | SIGNED, CHAPTER #182 |
| S8641A | STAVISKY -- | Relates to instilling mydriatic or cycloplegic eye drops by persons trained and deemed qualified by supervising licensed physicians or supervising licensed optometrists. | SIGNED, CHAPTER #180 |

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

| Bill | Sponsor | Summary | Action |
|-------------|------------------|--|---------------------------|
| S250A | KENNEDY | Establishes a private student loan refinance task force to study and report on ways lending institutions offering private student loans to graduates of institutions of higher education can be encouraged to establish student loan refinancing programs. | Passed Senate |
| S1797 | RIVERA | Relates to the performance of medical services by physician assistants. | Advanced to Third Reading |
| S2406A | SERRANO | Requires cultural awareness and competence training for medical professionals, including two hours of course work encompassing minority healthcare issues. | Passed Senate |
| S3661 | GOUNARDES | Reduces the cost of textbooks and course materials for students of institutions of higher education by requiring every institution of higher education to adopt policies that allow the use of innovative pricing techniques and payment options for textbooks, supplemental materials, and other course materials or textbooks. | Advanced to Third Reading |
| S3916C | STAVISKY | Provides a program fee option for graduate students. | Advance to Third Reading |
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| S4873A | STAVISKY | Directs the board of trustees of the state university of New York and the city university of New York to report on the current composition of faculty at four year campuses and community colleges. | Passed the Senate |
| S5023A | PARKER | Establishes the interagency task force on health literacy, to study health literacy and develop recommendations for improving health literacy in this state. | Passed the Senate |
| S5071A | SKOUFIS | Relates to allowing for students in certain postsecondary education experience or transition programs to receive awards from the tuition | Reported to Finance |

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| | | assistance program. | |
| S5093 | STAVISKY | Requires certain professionals to provide and the state education department to collect information about the practice of their professions. | Passed the Senate |
| S5695A | LIU | Relates to observance of all religious holidays by institutions within the state university and the city university of New York, and includes the Asian Lunar New Year within the definition of such holidays. | Passed the Senate |
| S5715 | METZGER | Relates to eligibility under the New York state young farmers loan forgiveness incentive program; expands program to farmers who have produced agricultural products for no more than ten years. | Reported to Finance |
| S5927A | STAVISKY | Establishes the PRODi-G EOP to PhD loan forgiveness program. | Reported to Finance |
| S6537 | MONTGOMERY | Relates to continuing the New York State Smart Scholars Early College High School Program and the New York State Pathways in Technology Early College High School Program. State Education Department | Passed the Senate |
| S6668 | RAMOS | Expands the eligibility period for indigent legal service attorneys to receive certain loan forgiveness and increases loan reimbursement for certain attorneys who work in legal services with indigent clients. | Reported to Finance |
| S6788A | BAILEY | Creates a commission to evaluate the need for community colleges to participate in the educational opportunity program. | Passed the Senate |
| S7117 | SANDERS | Relates to the minimum cumulative grade point average admission requirement for graduate-level teacher and educational leader programs; removes the minimum 3.0 or higher requirement. | Vetoed, Memo #75 |
| S7118 | SANDERS | Relates to admission requirements for graduate-level teacher and educational leader programs. | Advanced to Third Reading |
| S7132 | STAVISKY | Relates to requiring opioid training for medical professionals to reduce patient opioid abuse and reliance including nurses, nurse practitioners, psychologists, certain social workers, mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, psychoanalysts, physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and occupational therapists. | Passed the Senate |

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| S7149 | STAVISKY | Relates to the education requirements for a license as a professional engineer. | Advanced to Third Reading |
| S7235 | MAY | Relates to the supervision of the manufacturing and repacking of certain medical gases or wholesaling of respiratory therapy agents. | Passed the Senate |
| S7251 | STAVISKY | Standardizes the tuition assistance award schedules for dependent students at degree-granting colleges in the state. | Reported to Finance |
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