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Senator Carlucci's Legislation to Ensure Schools Do Not Lose Funding Due to COVID-19 Could Pass This Week

(Albany, NY) – Senator David Carlucci's (D-Rockland/Westchester) legislation (S.7996B) to safeguard school funding due to COVID-19 closures is expected to pass this week in the New York State Senate.

Under current State law, if a school is not open 180 days, they are subject to lose State funding. The East Ramapo Central School District, New Rochelle City School District, and Eastchester Union Free School District were among those impacted by the rule, as they closed out of an abundance of caution due to COVID-19, prior to the Governor's Executive Order, declaring a State of Emergency. While some of these districts tapped into their snow and emergency days to safeguard funding, Carlucci's bill will ensure any district who could not do this, will not lose State funding for the days of closure.

"School districts were working to protect our students, faculty and staff, and parents from a deadly virus," **said Senator David Carlucci**. School districts who closed due COVID-19 should be applauded for helping stop the spread of this virus and acting in the best interest of their students and communities. They should not be losing State funding for making difficult judgment calls in unprecedented times. Given the current need now more than ever, for school funding, we need this legislation signed into law."

State Senator Shelley B. Mayer, Chair of the Senate Education Committee, said, "Our schools must have the authority to make locally-based decisions to protect their communities from the coronavirus without threat of losing state funding under the 180-day provisions. Protecting our students & staff is of critical importance during the coronavirus pandemic, and we should not be punishing schools for prioritizing the health of their communities. I am glad to be a co-prime sponsor of S.7996-A to clarify that school districts will not lose state funding under the 180-day provisions if they closed school buildings due to the threat of the coronavirus."

Robert S. Schneider, Executive Director of the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA), said, "No school district leaders who responded to local concerns to protect the health of students and employees should be penalized by not receiving their full allotment of

state aid. Throughout this crisis, policy makers have stressed the importance of public health and safety. Now, lawmakers have an opportunity to back that up by enacting this legislation."

This legislation does not have a fiscal impact on the state, as it is funding schools that were already entitled to this funding through the State budget.

After the legislation passes in the Senate it would have to clear the Assembly and be signed into law by the Governor.

Carlucci believes there is support among lawmakers for the bill.