

NEW YORK STATE SENATE

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****PRESS RELEASE****

Skoufis Bill to Permit School Wards in Orange County Passes Senate

Senator James Skoufis (D-Hudson Valley) announced that his bill, S.7587, which permits school boards of education in Orange County to opt-into a ward system for school board elections, passed the State Senate.

School districts typically span through multiple towns and often include various competing interests. One way to safeguard equal representation across an entire district is to elect candidates from each geographic component of the community. In order to prevent overrepresentation or underrepresentation of one geographical area over the other on a school board, this legislation gives voters the option to approve a referendum that requires candidates reside in the respective election district.

“In all our communities, establishing school wards is a common-sense measure to ensure fair and equal representation in education,” **said Senator Skoufis**. “A number of our local school districts have requested this and I was proud to fight for the passage of this bill in Albany. Providing school districts with this option is a win-win for students and families because when more people’s voices can be heard, we can create a better system of education for our students.”

Kevin Radday, Co-Founder of Preserve Blooming Grove said, “Wards for school districts are vitally important to ensure equal representation. The Washingtonville School District is large and diverse and we need to make sure that for years to come all children of the district are represented. We applaud Senator Skoufis and his continued efforts on behalf of residents and students.”

Stephen Keahon, Co-Founder of Preserve Chester said, “I am thrilled to see this bill passed the Senate. Now more than ever, it is important that we create and maintain

equal representation in our school districts. Thank you to Senator Skoufis and the Senate for passing this crucial bill and ensuring everyone has a voice.”

The Assembly version of the bill is currently in the Education Committee and Skoufis called on the Assembly to get this passed before the end of legislative session.

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