



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Schools Ravaged By Irene & Lee Receive Special Waiver

JAMES L. SEWARD June 19, 2012

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ALBANY, 06/19/12 – Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) and Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo (D-Endwell) announced today that school districts, unable to open on time last fall due to damages incurred during Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, will not be penalized for lost days under legislation passed by both houses.

“Buildings at many school districts across upstate New York were under water to start the school year following Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee,” said Senator Seward. **“For some, repairing, sanitizing and prepping the buildings for student use took an extended period of time. Such extraordinary circumstances should not cost schools and their taxpayers any loss of state aid.”**

“It is our obligation to help our schools in any way we can,” said Assemblywoman Lupardo.

“Eliminating aid after such a devastating flood, from which our community is still recovering, would be unfair.”

Current law requires schools to be in session for 180 days to receive state education aid. The state education commissioner is permitted to waive that requirement if a district has lost five or fewer days. Under S.6284 (Seward)/A.9442 (Lupardo) the threshold would be doubled to ten days for those districts damaged by Irene and Lee.

“Schools did everything within their power to open their doors as quickly as possible following the devastating storms, with students themselves volunteering to do much of the clean-up. Many have been dealing with significant repair costs and should not suffer further by losing out on state education aid,” Seward added.

"Repairs and ongoing reconstruction following Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee greatly impacted the 2011-2012 school year for districts across upstate New York. This measure reduces pressure on local taxpayers while providing financial relief to these beleaguered school districts," Lupardo concluded.

The bill will be sent to the governor for his consideration.