



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

Senator Kennedy, Group of Senate Democrats to Vote ‘No’ on Incumbent Regents to Bring Change to State Education Department

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY March 6, 2014

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Four members of the NYS Board of Regents are at the end of their five-year terms.

Citing concerns over failed Common Core implementation, Kennedy and several Senate Democrats vow to vote ‘No’ on incumbent members of Board of Regents.

ALBANY, N.Y. – Senator Tim Kennedy, D-Buffalo, and several members of the Senate Democratic Conference today announced they will vote against the slate of incumbent candidates for the New York State Board of Regents in an attempt to shake-up and bring change to the State Education Department. Citing widespread frustration over the flawed implementation of the Common Core, four Democratic State Senators – Kennedy and Senators George Latimer, Cecelia Tkaczyk and Terry Gipson – said they plan to vote in opposition to the current group of regents whose five-year terms are ending this year.

The Regents supervise, set policy and provide oversight for all educational activities in the State of New York. Most recently, the Board of Regents has presided over the controversial implementation of the Common Core State Standards, and they have become the focus of great concern from parents, educators and public officials over the direction of education policy.

“Given recently exposed flaws and the woeful implementation of the Common Core, it is time to make wholesale changes at the State Education Department,” said **Senator Tim Kennedy**. “As concerns mount over the future of our children’s education, parents and families in Western New York are united in their frustration and overwhelming opposition to major components of the implementation of Common Core, and they are demanding decisive action within NYSED. We are anxious for new members on the Board of Regents who will bring fresh perspectives to the challenges we face. Children have come home from school in tears dealing with the stress caused by the pressure of high-stakes standardized testing, and educators have been hand-cuffed in their work to instill a love of learning in our classrooms. With new ideas from new Regents, our State Education Department will have the responsive leadership necessary to help restore the promise of our schools and strengthen our statewide education system.”

Senator George Latimer, ranking member on the Senate’s Education Committee stated, “I’ve heard from countless parents, teachers, students and administrators from Bedford to Bronxville and communities in between that the direction of SED and the Board of Regents is misguided and needs to fully reassess implementation of the Common Core State Standards. My 20 years in the private sector have taught me that decision makers must be held accountable for the performance of their entities. The Board of Regents is the managing leadership that sets the direction of state education policy and it is clear that there needs to be some fundamental changes.”

Senator Cecelia Tkaczyk said, “The Board of Regents must be held accountable and take responsibility for the extremely flawed roll-out of Common Core in New York State. The debacle created by the Regents has had a devastating effect on our students, schools, teachers and administrators. I cannot in good conscience vote to retain them, and believe very strongly they should be replaced with new members who will bring a fresh approach

and a greater level of understanding of the issues facing our schools.”

“I will not be voting to reinstate the incumbent Regents because students, parents, educators and taxpayers deserve to have accountability in their state government, and it is obvious that the implementation of the Common Core Curriculum has been a failure,” said **Senator Terry Gipson**. “As an Albany outsider, I refuse to sit back and vote with the status quo. There is nothing more important than our children's education and future.”

The vote for the Board of Regents will take place next Tuesday, March 11 during a joint session of the State Legislature. Four Regents are at the end of their terms and are seeking reappointment from the Legislature. Over 20 qualified candidates with strong credentials and new perspectives interviewed for the four open seats, and Kennedy, Latimer, Tkaczyk and Gipson are urging colleagues in the Legislature to take advantage of this opportunity to unseat several regents who presided over the extremely flawed implementation of the Common Core and elect new members who will bring needed change to the State Education Department.

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Senator Timothy M. Kennedy represents the New York State Senate’s 63rd District, which is comprised of the town of Cheektowaga, the city of Lackawanna and nearly all of the city of Buffalo. More information is available at <http://kennedy.nysenate.gov>.