



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara signs on to legislation calling for 3-year delay of Common Core

THOMAS F. O'MARA June 17, 2014

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Albany, N.Y., June 17—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C-Big Flats) today announced that he will co-sponsor legislation to halt the implementation of the state's new, controversial Common Core educational standards for three years.

O'Mara, who earlier this year joined what's become a rapidly building consensus within the Legislature to fully delay Common Core's implementation, said that supporters of the proposed legislation (S.6604-A/A.8844-A) will be pushing for its enactment before the end of the Legislature's regularly scheduled session this week.

A news conference and rally in support of the measure will be held at the Capitol this morning.

The 2014-15 state budget included a two-year delay in the use of Common Core-based test scores for students in grades 3 through 8, which O'Mara called a good first step. But he blamed the state Board of Regents and Governor Andrew Cuomo for failing to take additional steps toward a more comprehensive rollback, delay and reevaluation of Common Core.

"Families, educators and administrators across the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions have been loud and clear in expressing their fears over and opposition to the flawed implementation of Common Core. We're all for educational standards that allow our students to fully succeed, but Common Core has gone too far, too fast," said O'Mara. "There needs to be a comprehensive reevaluation and this legislation would effectively accomplish the goal of putting a stop to what's been a disastrously flawed process."

The legislation O'Mara is co-sponsoring calls for creating an independent commission, the "Blue Ribbon Commission on 21st Century Testing and Curriculum."

The new 23-member independent commission, which would be comprised of members appointed by the governor, legislative leaders and education advocates including the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), the state School Boards Association and the state Parent Teacher Association (PTA), would hold statewide public hearings, solicit and review public input, and make recommendations to the governor and the Legislature on:

- > appropriate standards and testing at each grade level;
- > the best methods for implementing any new tests and standards; and
- > the age appropriateness of testing at each grade level.

The commission would also examine the time and resources allocated to preparing for and administering statewide tests and the impact they have on the quality of instruction for students.

The Commission's review period would conclude in the 2016-17 school year. During that time, school districts would not be required to implement the Common Core curriculum or administer any state tests based on the standards.