



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

Serino Supports Regents Shake-Up

SUE SERINO March 10, 2015

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ALBANY, NY—Senator Sue Serino (R, C, I—Hyde Park) released the following statement regarding today’s election of members to the New York State Board of Regents. The Senate and Assembly came together for a Joint Legislative Session to vote on five incumbents and two new candidates looking to serve on the body charged with the general supervision of every aspect of the State’s education system.

“I came to Albany to shake things up and today I took a stand against the status quo. The process of electing our Regents could not be more flawed. Being controlled by one house and one party, it flies in the very face of democracy.

It is no secret that the Board of Regents played a direct role in the disastrous implementation of the Common Core Standards. At a time when it’s clear that the Board is out of touch and non-responsive to the public, there needs to be a change in how they are selected and elected.

Having heard from countless parents, students, educators and administrators frustrated with the state of education in New York, I could not—in good conscious—support a Board that I believe will only perpetuate the current state of affairs.

My constituents deserve a real voice in this process and I will fight tirelessly to give them one.”

In protest of the process, Senator Serino did not support the election of any of the seven candidates elected today. She did however, cast a vote in favor of Dr. Gerard Benjamin, who was put forth during the Session by Chair of the Senate Education Committee, John Flanagan. Dr. Benjamin was running for an at-large seat currently occupied by Regent Lester Young from Brooklyn, who voted to adopt the Common Core Standards.

In explaining this vote, Senator Serino said, *“Mr. Benjamin stands out as a candidate capable of listening carefully to opposing views and making decisions based on his rational and highly skilled level of reasoning. Further, he is a firm believer in local control in education. I am confident in his ability to hear the voices of frustrated New Yorkers and to be able to make decisions that will actually improve the quality of our schools.”*

It should also be noted that Senator Serino co-sponsors a bill ([S. 2246](#)) that would create a ‘Commission on Regents Nominations’ in order to create a formal selection process to properly review and vet our Regents candidates. The bill would make the Regents selection more representative while also increasing transparency and accountability in the historically closed-door process.

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