



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Murphy leads fight to keep school water clean

TERRENCE MURPHY June 21, 2016

Albany, NY - Many of us, particularly those with school-aged children, have been shocked by the ongoing crisis in Flint, Michigan where deadly concentrations of lead have leached into the city's water system. Senator Terrence has taken action to make sure that will not happen in the Hudson Valley, co-sponsoring legislation to protect our children from being exposed to potentially dangerous lead levels in school drinking water. The bill ensures that periodic tap water testing for lead will be conducted by schools in order to obtain important information about the quality of students' drinking water.

"Children absorb lead faster than adults. A high level of lead in a child's bloodstream can affect their ability to learn and can even cause brain damage," Senator Murphy said. "We now have measures in place for testing our school's drinking water and that the results will be reported on a timely basis. Safe drinking water in our schools should be a given for our children."

While some schools in New York conduct testing for lead, not all do, and this bill would create a standard testing protocol to ensure students are protected. School districts and BOCES would undergo periodic tap testing at a frequency to be set by DOH. Buildings built after 2014 will be exempt, schools testing negative would be given waivers, and schools with water containing unacceptable amounts of lead would be eligible for additional financial assistance for the costs of testing and remediation.

"There's not a more important place to start this overall and ongoing effort to better address lead contamination than within our schools to protect children," said Senator O'Mara, Chairman of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee. "The increasing incidents of lead contamination in school drinking water systems demand that we take short- and long-term actions to strengthen testing, reporting and remediation requirements."

The bill were sent to the Assembly where they were passed.