



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

Statement From Deputy Senate Republican Leader Joseph A. Griffo

JOHN J. FLANAGAN January 23, 2019

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Today, Senate Republicans offered a reasoned and common-sense amendment that would have eliminated high stakes testing in New York once and for all. Despite the fact that this is the approach favored by students, parents and teachers alike, Senate Democrats voted it down.

Instead, they advanced legislation that merely decouples student test scores from the evaluation of teachers, and leaves behind many of the same tests imposed under APPR. Our

members ultimately voted for that measure because doing something is always preferable to doing nothing. However, it's clear from the educators and parents I talk to every day that the Senate Democrats aren't really listening to their concerns.

Our amendment was a way to take a failed system imposed in 2015 by Governor Cuomo and to do away with it in its entirety. And, it would have returned to local control of our education system, which is exactly where it should be. Now that the Governor has seen the light on this issue, it's perplexing that he would cling to any of this mess.

My fear is that the Democrats in the Legislature are letting partisan politics get in the way of sound public policy. That is not good for the students of this state -- who will continue to be subject to their high stakes testing -- and it's not good for the constituents I represent. If this is what the change promised by Senate Democrats looks like, we're all in big trouble.