



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Alessandra Biaggi

## SENATOR BIAGGI JOINS SENATE MAJORITY TO PASS LEGISLATION TO SUPPORT EDUCATION DIVERSITY ACROSS NEW YORK STATE

ALESSANDRA BIAGGI February 4, 2021

**BRONX, NY** – This week State Senator Alessandra Biaggi joined the Senate Democratic Majority in passing major legislation to address the inequity in New York schools and to support diversity in our education system. The bills advanced will implement ‘Grow Your Own’ initiatives to help more New Yorkers become educators, expand eligible religious holidays observances, determine ways to increase SUNY participation in the Educational Opportunity Program, and provide more support, training, and mentorship opportunities for educators.

**State Senator Alessandra Biaggi (D-Bronx/Westchester) issued the following statement:**

“In order to support New York’s students, we must continue to tear down existing barriers in the classroom. It is critical that we provide the necessary attention and resources to ensure that our schools and the educator profession are inclusive and accessible, and reflect the diversity of New York’s student population. I appreciate the leadership of the bill sponsors and Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins to move this important package forward.”

**The bills advanced in the package include:**

- ‘Grow Your Own’ Initiatives: This legislation, Senate Bill [S.1100](#) sponsored by Senator John Liu, develops ‘Grow Your Own’ initiatives at school districts, boards of cooperative educational services and higher education institutions to attract underrepresented candidates into the teaching profession.
- Expanded Observance of Religious Holidays: This legislation, Senate Bill [S.1137](#) sponsored by Senator John Liu, mandates that the state and city universities of New York shall hold students harmless for their observance of religious and culturally significant holidays.
- Commission on Affordable College Education: This legislation, Senate Bill [S.1520](#) sponsored by Senator Jamaal Bailey, establishes a temporary State commission to study the ten SUNY community colleges that have not participated in the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) and make recommendations for legislative action based upon its findings.
- Amistad Commission: This legislation, Senate Bill [S.1924](#) sponsored by Senator Robert Jackson, moves the Amistad Commission from the Department of State to the New York State Education Department. The [Amistad Commission](#) was created in 2005 by the Legislature to review New York State's curricula regarding the transatlantic slave trade and slavery in America, and make recommendations for improvement.
- Regional Conventions for Underrepresented Educators: This legislation, Senate Bill [S.1984](#) sponsored by Senator Robert Jackson, directs the commissioner of education to convene statewide and regional conventions to bring together underrepresented teachers to discuss experiences, best practices, and provide for mentorship and networking opportunities.
- Establish a Task Force on Educator Diversity: This legislation, Senate Bill [S.2555](#) sponsored by Senator Jabari Brisport, establishes a task force on educator diversity in New York State.

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