



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

Helming and Gallahan Bill Would Require Equitable Appointments to Committees and Task Forces Established by the Legislature

PAMELA HELMING March 4, 2021

Senator Pam Helming has introduced a bill in the State Senate (S.5059) that would require all legislatively-enacted committees, commissions, task forces and other working groups to have an equitable number of appointments by the majority and minority parties of the Senate and Assembly. The bill is sponsored in the Assembly by Assemblyman Jeff Gallahan.

“New Yorkers have equitable representation in the Legislature. They should also have equitable representation on committees, task forces and other working groups created by the Legislature,” said Senator Helming. “These groups often collect data and information and provide recommendations to the Legislature that can influence policy and funding decisions. So it is very important that these groups represent a diverse set of voices and experiences. We can help achieve that by allowing the minority to appoint members, just as the majority and the Executive can.”

“Legislative study groups and commissions play a critical role in the policy making process. We need to ensure that the voices of all New Yorkers are heard through their representation on these important committees. The passage of our legislation would be a step forward for transparency in government and would help to restore the proper, constitutional role of the elected members of the State Legislature,” said Assemblyman Gallahan.

The bill also states that the number of appointments made by the Executive branch will not exceed the number of appointments made by the Legislature.

“These appointed groups are tasked with studying and issuing reports and recommendations on every issue imaginable – economic and workforce development, agriculture, education, public safety, services for seniors and people with disabilities,” Senator Helming added.

“Surely Republicans and Democrats can agree that our constituents should be represented equally on these issues.”