



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin Thomas

New York State Legislature Passes Bill to Stop Transcript Withholding in Higher Education

KEVIN THOMAS March 31, 2022

| ISSUE: **TRANSCRIPT WITHHOLDING, TRANSCRIPT RANSOMING, STUDENT LOANS, STUDENT DEBT, HIGHER EDUCATION**

| COMMITTEE: **CONSUMER PROTECTION**



(Albany, NY) — Consumer Protection Committee Chair Kevin Thomas today announced that a bill to stop the practice of “transcript ransoming” has passed both houses of the state legislature and is now on its way to the Governor’s desk.

Transcript withholding, also known as “transcript ransoming”, is a practice that allows colleges and universities to withhold a student's transcript as a tool to get them to pay debts owed to the institution,

sometimes debts as small as twenty-five dollars. According to the U.S. Education Secretary, transcript withholding drives inequitable outcomes by preventing students from graduating, transferring, or applying for jobs.

The legislation (S.5924C/A.6938), sponsored by Senator Kevin Thomas and Assemblymember Harvey Epstein, prohibits schools from using transcript withholding as a debt collection tool, and establishes remedies for students harmed by the withholding of a transcript.

"Transcripts are a record of a students' education -- they are not and were never meant to be tools for debt collection," said Senator Kevin Thomas. "Our legislation will remove this ineffective and counterproductive barrier in higher education and ensure all residents of New York have access to a full and complete higher education."

The bill now moves to the Governor's desk for final approval.

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2021-S5924C

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- Introduced
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 - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ○ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
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Relates to prohibited practices relating to student educational debt

March 23, 2021

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Kevin Thomas**

Do you support this bill?

2021-A6938

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 - In Committee Senate

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April 14, 2021

Signed by Governor

Do you support this bill?