



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

May 4, 2015

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Office Building
Room 821
Albany, NY 12207

Senator Charles E. Schumer
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Office Building
Room 420
Albany, NY 12207

Dear Senators Gillibrand and Schumer:

We write to enlist your support in protecting New York State's increasingly fragile education system. Since implementing the Common Core testing standards, students, teachers and parents have experienced increasing confusion and anxiety. The serious programmatic flaws in the standardized tests prompted nearly 200,000 students to refuse the Common Core exams this spring.

U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan has taken a troubling position in response to the unprecedented number of test refusals. Secretary Duncan suggested that the federal government could withhold funding if school districts don't meet the 95 percent participation rate for the Common Core tests. This is a punitive and short-sighted mentality that will only exacerbate the mounting issues in New York's education system.

Withholding federal resources threatens the ability of our schools to maintain staffing levels, provide needed programs, and give our children a high-quality education. We want to afford students every opportunity to succeed and learn, but that demands thoughtful reforms not unfair punishment.

As state leaders, our obligation is to facilitate improvements that help our children. Penalizing districts will have the opposite effect. It is our hope that you will do everything in your power to help protect our children and their future. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Brian M. Kolb
NYS Assembly Minority Leader

Ed Ra
NYS Assemblyman, 19th District

Al Graf
NYS Assemblyman, 5th District

Jim Tedisco
NYS Assemblyman, 112th District

Robert C. Oaks
NYS Assemblyman, 130th District

Marc W. Butler
NYS Assemblyman, 118th District

Clifford W. Crouch
NYS Assemblyman, 122nd District

Gary D. Finch
NYS Assemblyman, 126th District

Dave McDonough
NYS Assemblyman, 14th District

Will Barclay
NYS Assemblyman, 120th District

Michael Fitzpatrick
NYS Assemblyman, 8th District

Andrew Raia
NYS Assemblyman, 12th District

Joseph S. Saladino
NYS Assemblyman, 9th District

Joseph M. Giglio
NYS Assemblyman, 148th District

Steve Hawley
NYS Assemblyman, 139th District

Tom McKeivitt
NYS Assemblyman, 17th District

Janet L. Duprey
NYS Assemblywoman, 115th District

Pete Lopez
NYS Assemblyman, 102nd District

Jane Corwin
NYS Assemblywoman, 144th District

Michael Montesano
NYS Assemblyman, 15th District

Ken Blankenbush
NYS Assemblyman, 117th District

John D. Ceretto
NYS Assemblyman, 145th District

Brian Curran
NYS Assemblyman, 21st District

Christopher S. Friend
NYS Assemblyman, 124th District

Andy Goodell
NYS Assemblyman, 150th District

Mark Johns
NYS Assemblyman, 135th District

Steve Katz
NYS Assemblyman, 94th District

Nicole Malliotakis
NYS Assemblywoman, 64th District

Steve McLaughlin
NYS Assemblyman, 107th District

Phil Palmesano
NYS Assemblyman, 132nd District

Claudia Tenney
NYS Assemblywoman, 101st District

Raymond Walter
NYS Assemblyman, 146th District

Joe Borelli
NYS Assemblyman, 62nd District

David DiPietro
NYS Assemblyman, 147th District

Andrew Garbarino
NYS Assemblyman, 7th District

Chad Lupinacci
NYS Assemblyman, 10th District

Bill Nojay
NYS Assemblyman, 133rd District

Daniel Stec
NYS Assemblyman, 114th District

Anthony Palumbo
NYS Assemblyman, 2nd District

Karl Brabenec
NYS Assemblyman, 98th District

Peter Lawrence
NYS Assemblyman, 134th District

Dean Murray
NYS Assemblyman, 3rd District

Angela Wozniak
NYS Assemblywoman, 143rd District