S T A T E O F N E W Y O R K

4385--A

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N S E N A T E

March 18, 2015

Introduced by Sen. RANZENHOFER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Education -- recommitted to the Committee on Education in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT establishing the school energy efficiency program

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Legislative intent. At a cost annually of over $1 billion dollars in utility costs, the energy costs for public schools in New York need to be addressed to reduce such escalating costs and to allow for a redirection of such expenditures to improve academic performance in our state. The legislature therefore finds that New York state should conduct a review of the project approval process to determine how best to expedite the start of construction and implementation of school energy efficiency projects. Currently, energy projects are reviewed by the same group at the New York state education department that is also responsible for reviewing critical school district capital projects. The process review should focus on how a higher priority might be given to energy efficiency projects while at the same time ensuring that mission-critical capital projects are not delayed. Pursuing all cost-effective energy efficiency in New York state schools will require that many more projects will need to be approved annually than have ever been in the past. A streamlined, transparent, and efficient review and approval process is a necessary component of an increased effort to promote energy efficiency projects in schools.

S 2. School energy efficiency program. 1. Establishment. There is hereby established the school energy efficiency program. Under this program, the department shall construct a proposal to streamline the approval process for eligible entities pursuing the installation of energy efficiency projects.

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [ ] is old law to be omitted.

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2. Proposal requirements. The department through this program shall:

a. demonstrate how energy efficiency project approval requests will be processed separately from all other capital improvement applications;

b. set a specific date for when the streamlined approval process shall be in place; and

c. determine if any legislative action is necessary to make the streamlined approval process operational.

3. Report. The department shall report its findings, conclusions and recommendations to the governor, majority leader of the senate and the speaker of the assembly by January 1, 2018.

4. Definitions. For purposes of this program the following terms shall have the following meanings:

a. "Department" shall mean the New York state education department.

b. "Eligible entity" shall mean any public elementary or secondary school located in New York state.

S 3. This act shall take effect immediately.