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2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N   S E N A T E

June 9, 2015

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Introduced by Sen. RANZENHOFER -- read twice and ordered printed, and  
when printed to be committed to the Committee on Rules

AN ACT to amend the not-for-profit corporation law, the estates, powers  
and trusts law and the religious corporations law, in relation to the  
reform of charitable corporations

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

1     Section 1. Subdivisions 6-a, 19, 21, 22, 23 and 25 of paragraph (a) of  
2     section 102 of the not-for-profit corporation law, as added by chapter  
3     549 of the laws of 2013, are amended to read as follows:  
4     (6-a) "Entire board" means the total number of directors entitled to  
5     vote which the corporation would have if there were no vacancies. If the  
6     by-laws of the corporation provide that the board shall consist of a  
7     fixed number of directors, then the "entire board" shall consist of that  
8     number of directors. If the by-laws of any corporation provide that the  
9     board may consist of a range between a minimum and maximum number of  
10    directors, AND THE NUMBER WITHIN THAT RANGE HAS NOT BEEN FIXED IN  
11    ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (A) OF SECTION SEVEN HUNDRED TWO OF THIS CHAP-  
12    TER, then the "entire board" shall consist of the number of directors  
13    within such range that were elected OR APPOINTED as of the most recently  
14    held election of directors, AS WELL AS ANY DIRECTORS WHOSE TERMS HAVE  
15    NOT YET EXPIRED.  
16    (19) An "affiliate" of a corporation means any entity controlled by,  
17    OR in control of, [or under common control with] such corporation.  
18    (21) "Independent director" means a director who: (i) is not, and has  
19    not been within the last three years, an employee of the corporation or  
20    an affiliate of the corporation, and does not have a relative who is, or  
21    has been within the last three years, a key employee of the corporation  
22    or an affiliate of the corporation; (ii) has not received, and does not  
23    have a relative who has received, in any of the last three fiscal years,  
24    more than ten thousand dollars in direct compensation from the corpo-

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

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1 ration or an affiliate of the corporation (other than reimbursement for  
2 expenses reasonably incurred as a director or reasonable compensation  
3 for service as a director as permitted by paragraph (a) of section 202  
4 (General and special powers)); [and] (iii) is not a current employee of  
5 or does not have a substantial financial interest in, and does not have  
6 a relative who is a current officer of or has a substantial financial  
7 interest in, any entity that has made payments to, or received payments  
8 from, the corporation or an affiliate of the corporation for property or  
9 services in an amount which, in any of the last three fiscal years,  
10 exceeds the lesser of twenty-five thousand dollars or two percent of  
11 such entity's consolidated gross revenues; OR (IV) IS NOT AND DOES NOT  
12 HAVE A RELATIVE WHO IS A CURRENT OWNER, WHETHER WHOLLY OR PARTIALLY,  
13 DIRECTOR, OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE OF THE CORPORATION'S OUTSIDE AUDITOR OR  
14 WHO HAS WORKED ON THE CORPORATION'S AUDIT AT ANY TIME DURING THE PAST  
15 THREE YEARS. For purposes of this [subparagraph] SUBDIVISION, "payment"  
16 does not include charitable contributions, DUES OR FEES PAID TO THE  
17 CORPORATION FOR SERVICES WHICH THE CORPORATION PERFORMS AS PART OF ITS  
18 NONPROFIT PURPOSES.

19 (22) "Relative" of an individual means [his or her] (i) HIS OR HER  
20 spouse[, ] OR DOMESTIC PARTNER AS DEFINED IN SECTION TWENTY-NINE HUNDRED  
21 NINETY-FOUR-A OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH LAW; (II) HIS OR HER ancestors,  
22 brothers and sisters (whether whole or half blood), children (whether  
23 natural or adopted), grandchildren, great-grandchildren[, and spouses];  
24 OR (III) THE SPOUSE OR DOMESTIC PARTNER of HIS OR HER brothers, sisters,  
25 children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren[; or (ii) domestic  
26 partner as defined in section twenty-nine hundred ninety-four-a of the  
27 public health law].

28 (23) "Related party" means (i) any director, officer or key employee  
29 of the corporation or any affiliate of the corporation, OR ANY OTHER  
30 PERSON WHO EXERCISES THE POWERS OF DIRECTORS, OFFICERS OR KEY EMPLOYEES  
31 OVER THE AFFAIRS OF THE CORPORATION OR ANY AFFILIATE OF THE CORPORATION;  
32 (ii) any relative of any [director, officer or key employee of the  
33 corporation or any affiliate of the corporation] INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED IN  
34 CLAUSE (I) OF THIS SUBDIVISION; or (iii) any entity in which any indi-  
35 vidual described in clauses (i) and (ii) of this [subparagraph] SUBDIVI-  
36 SION has a thirty-five percent or greater ownership or beneficial inter-  
37 est or, in the case of a partnership or professional corporation, a  
38 direct or indirect ownership interest in excess of five percent.

39 (25) "Key employee" means any person who is in a position to exercise  
40 substantial influence over the affairs of the corporation, as referenced  
41 in 26 U.S.C. S 4958(f)(1)(A) and further specified in 26 CFR S  
42 53.4958-3(c), (d) and (e), or succeeding provisions TO THE EXTENT SUCH  
43 PROVISIONS ARE APPLICABLE.

44 S 2. Paragraph (b) of section 515 of the not-for-profit corporation  
45 law, as amended by chapter 549 of the laws of 2013, is amended to read  
46 as follows:

47 (b) A corporation may pay compensation in a reasonable amount to  
48 members, directors, or officers, for services rendered, and may make  
49 distributions of cash or property to members upon dissolution or final  
50 liquidation as permitted by this chapter. No person who may benefit from  
51 such compensation may be present at or otherwise participate in any  
52 board or committee deliberation or vote concerning such person's compen-  
53 sation; provided that nothing in this section shall prohibit the board  
54 or authorized committee from requesting that a person who may benefit  
55 from such compensation present information as background or answer ques-  
56 tions at a committee or board meeting prior to the commencement of

1 deliberations or voting relating thereto. NOTHING IN THIS SECTION OR IN  
2 PARAGRAPH (H) OF SECTION SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTEEN OF THIS CHAPTER SHALL BE  
3 CONSTRUED TO PROHIBIT A DIRECTOR FROM DELIBERATING OR VOTING CONCERNING  
4 COMPENSATION FOR SERVICE ON THE BOARD THAT IS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE OR  
5 PROVIDED TO ALL DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION ON THE SAME OR SUBSTANTIAL-  
6 LY SIMILAR TERMS.

7 S 3. Paragraph (b) of section 702 of the not-for-profit corporation  
8 law is amended to read as follows:

9 (b) The number of directors may be increased or decreased by amendment  
10 of the by-laws or[, in the case of a corporation having members,] by  
11 action of the members, or of the board under the specific provisions of  
12 a by-law [adopted by the members], subject to the following limitations:

13 (1) If the board is authorized by the by-laws to change the number of  
14 directors, whether by amending the by-laws or by taking action under the  
15 specific provisions of a by-law [adopted by the members], such amendment  
16 or action shall require the vote of a majority of the entire board.

17 (2) No decrease shall shorten the term of any incumbent director.

18 S 4. Paragraph (d) of section 708 of the not-for-profit corporation  
19 law, as amended by chapter 173 of the laws of 1975 and as relettered by  
20 chapter 314 of the laws of 1977, is amended to read as follows:

21 (d) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, the vote of a major-  
22 ity of the directors present at the time of the vote, if a quorum is  
23 present at such time, shall be the act of the board. DIRECTORS WHO ARE  
24 PRESENT AT A MEETING BUT NOT PRESENT AT THE TIME OF A VOTE DUE TO A  
25 CONFLICT OF INTEREST OR RELATED PARTY TRANSACTION SHALL BE DETERMINED TO  
26 BE PRESENT AT THE TIME OF THE VOTE FOR PURPOSES OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

27 S 5. Paragraph (e) of section 712 of the not-for-profit corporation  
28 law, as amended by chapter 549 of the laws of 2013, is amended to read  
29 as follows:

30 (e) Committees, other than committees of the board, whether created by  
31 the board or by the members, shall be committees of the corporation.  
32 [Such committees of the corporation may be elected or appointed in the  
33 same manner as officers of the corporation, but no] NO such committee  
34 shall have the authority to bind the board. Provisions of this chapter  
35 applicable to officers generally shall apply to members of such commit-  
36 tees. [Such] MEMBERS OF SUCH committees of the corporation, WHO MAY BE  
37 NON-DIRECTORS, shall be elected or appointed in the manner set forth in  
38 the by-laws, or if not set forth in the by-laws, in the same manner as  
39 officers of the corporation.

40 S 6. Paragraph (e) of section 712-a of the not-for-profit corporation  
41 law, as added by chapter 549 of the laws of 2013, is amended to read as  
42 follows:

43 (e) Only independent directors may participate in any board or commit-  
44 tee deliberations or voting relating to matters set forth in this  
45 section, PROVIDED THAT NOTHING IN THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL PROHIBIT THE  
46 BOARD OR DESIGNATED AUDIT COMMITTEE FROM REQUESTING THAT A PERSON WITH  
47 AN INTEREST IN THE MATTER PRESENT INFORMATION AS BACKGROUND OR ANSWER  
48 QUESTIONS AT A COMMITTEE OR BOARD MEETING PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF  
49 DELIBERATIONS OR VOTING RELATING THERETO.

50 S 7. Paragraphs (e), (f), (f) and (g) of section 715 of the not-for-  
51 profit corporation law, paragraph (e) as amended and paragraphs (f), (f)  
52 and (g) as added by chapter 549 of the laws of 2013, are amended to read  
53 as follows:

54 (e) The fixing of [salaries] COMPENSATION of officers, if not done in  
55 or pursuant to the by-laws, shall require the affirmative vote of a

majority of the entire board unless a higher proportion is set by the certificate of incorporation or by-laws.

(f) The attorney general may bring an action to enjoin, void or rescind any related party transaction or proposed related party transaction that violates any provision of this chapter or was otherwise not reasonable or in the best interests of the corporation at the time the transaction was approved, or to seek restitution, and the removal of directors or officers, or seek to require any person or entity to:

(1) Account for any profits made from such transaction, and pay them to the corporation;

(2) Pay the corporation the value of the use of any of its property or other assets used in such transaction;

(3) Return or replace any property or other assets lost to the corporation as a result of such transaction, together with any income or appreciation lost to the corporation by reason of such transaction, or account for any proceeds of sale of such property, and pay the proceeds to the corporation together with interest at the legal rate; and

(4) Pay, in the case of willful and intentional conduct, an amount up to double the amount of any benefit improperly obtained.

[(f)] (G) The powers of the attorney general provided in this section are in addition to all other powers the attorney general may have under this chapter or any other law.

[(g)] (H) No related party may participate in deliberations or voting relating to [matters set forth in this section] A RELATED PARTY TRANSACTION IN WHICH HE OR SHE HAS AN INTEREST; provided that nothing in this section shall prohibit the board or authorized committee from requesting that a related party present information AS BACKGROUND OR ANSWER QUESTIONS concerning a related party transaction at a board or committee meeting prior to the commencement of deliberations or voting relating thereto.

S 8. Subdivision 3 of paragraph (b) of section 715-a of the not-for-profit corporation law, as added by chapter 549 of the laws of 2013, is amended to read as follows:

(3) a requirement that the person with the conflict of interest not be present at or participate in board or committee deliberation or vote on the matter giving rise to such conflict, PROVIDED THAT NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL PROHIBIT THE BOARD OR A COMMITTEE FROM REQUESTING THAT THE PERSON WITH THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST PRESENT INFORMATION AS BACKGROUND OR ANSWER QUESTIONS AT A COMMITTEE OR BOARD MEETING PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF DELIBERATIONS OR VOTING RELATING THERETO;

S 9. Paragraph (c) of section 715-a of the not-for-profit corporation law, as added by chapter 549 of the laws of 2013, is amended to read as follows:

(c) The conflict of interest policy shall require that prior to the initial election of any director, and annually thereafter, such director shall complete, sign and submit to the secretary of the corporation OR A DESIGNATED COMPLIANCE OFFICER a written statement identifying, to the best of the director's knowledge, any entity of which such director is an officer, director, trustee, member, owner (either as a sole proprietor or a partner), or employee and with which the corporation has a relationship, and any transaction in which the corporation is a participant and in which the director might have a conflicting interest. The policy shall require that each director annually resubmit such written statement. The secretary of the corporation OR THE DESIGNATED COMPLIANCE OFFICER shall provide a copy of all completed statements to the

1 chair of the audit committee or, if there is no audit committee, to the  
2 chair of the board.

3 S 10. Subdivision 3 of paragraph (b) of section 715-b of the not-for-  
4 profit corporation law, as added by chapter 549 of the laws of 2013, is  
5 amended to read as follows:

6 (3) A requirement that a copy of the policy be distributed to all  
7 directors, officers, employees and to volunteers who provide substantial  
8 services to the corporation. FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SUBDIVISION, POSTING  
9 THE POLICY ON THE CORPORATION'S WEBSITE OR AT THE CORPORATION'S OFFICES  
10 IN A CONSPICUOUS LOCATION ACCESSIBLE TO EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS ARE  
11 AMONG THE METHODS A CORPORATION MAY USE TO SATISFY THE DISTRIBUTION  
12 REQUIREMENT.

13 S 11. Paragraph (b) of section 1407 of the not-for-profit corporation  
14 law, as amended by chapter 549 of the laws of 2013, is amended to read  
15 as follows:

16 (b) Type of corporation.

17 An alumni corporation is a [non-charitable] CHARITABLE corporation.

18 S 12. Subdivisions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of paragraph (a) of section 8-1.9  
19 of the estates, powers and trusts law, as added by chapter 549 of the  
20 laws of 2013, are amended to read as follows:

21 (3) "Key employee" means any person who is in a position to exercise  
22 substantial influence over the affairs of the [corporation] TRUST, as  
23 referenced in 26 U.S.C. section 4958(f)(1)(A) and further specified in  
24 26 C.F.R. section 53.4958-3(c), (d) and (e), or succeeding provisions  
25 TO THE EXTENT SUCH PROVISIONS ARE APPLICABLE.

26 (4) An "affiliate" of a trust means any entity controlled by, OR in  
27 control of, [or under common control with] such trust.

28 (5) "Relative" of an individual means [his or her] (i) HIS OR HER  
29 spouse[, ] OR DOMESTIC PARTNER AS DEFINED IN SECTION TWENTY-NINE HUNDRED  
30 NINETY-FOUR-A OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH LAW; (II) HIS OR HER ancestors,  
31 brothers and sisters (whether whole or half blood), children (whether  
32 natural or adopted), grandchildren, great-grandchildren[, and spouses];  
33 OR (III) THE SPOUSE OR DOMESTIC PARTNER of HIS OR HER brothers, sisters,  
34 children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren[; and (ii) his or her  
35 domestic partner as defined in section twenty-nine hundred ninety-four-a  
36 of the public health law].

37 (6) "Related party" means (i) any trustee or key employee of the trust  
38 or any affiliate of the trust OR ANY OTHER PERSON WHO EXERCISES THE  
39 POWERS OF A TRUSTEE OR KEY EMPLOYEE OVER THE AFFAIRS OF THE TRUST OR ANY  
40 AFFILIATE OF THE TRUST; (ii) any relative of any [trustee or key employ-  
41 ee of the trust or any affiliate of the trust] INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED IN  
42 CLAUSE (I) OF THIS SUBDIVISION; or (iii) an entity in which any individ-  
43 ual described in clauses (i) and (ii) of this [subparagraph] SUBDIVISION  
44 has a thirty-five percent or greater ownership or beneficial interest  
45 or, in the case of a partnership or professional corporation, a direct  
46 ownership interest in excess of five percent.

47 (7) "Independent trustee" means a trustee who: (i) is not, and has not  
48 been within the last three years, an employee of the trust or an affil-  
49 iate of the trust, and does not have a relative who is, or has been  
50 within the last three years, a key employee of the trust or an affiliate  
51 of the trust; (ii) has not received, and does not have a relative who  
52 has received, in any of the last three fiscal years, more than ten thou-  
53 sand dollars in direct compensation from the trust or an affiliate of  
54 the trust (other than reimbursement for expenses or the payment of trus-  
55 tee commissions OR REASONABLE COMPENSATION as permitted by law and the  
56 governing instrument); [and] (iii) is not a current employee of or does

1 not have a substantial financial interest in, and does not have a rela-  
2 tive who is a current officer of or have a substantial financial inter-  
3 est in, any entity that has made payments to, or received payments from,  
4 the trust or an affiliate of the trust for property or services in an  
5 amount which, in any of the last three fiscal years, exceeds the lesser  
6 of twenty-five thousand dollars or two percent of such entity's consol-  
7 idated gross revenues; OR (IV) IS NOT AND DOES NOT HAVE A RELATIVE WHO  
8 IS A CURRENT OWNER, WHETHER WHOLLY OR PARTIALLY, DIRECTOR, OFFICER OR  
9 EMPLOYEE OF THE TRUST'S OUTSIDE AUDITOR OR WHO HAS WORKED ON THE TRUST'S  
10 AUDIT AT ANY TIME DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS. For purposes of this  
11 [subparagraph] SUBDIVISION, "payment" does not include charitable  
12 contributions, DUES OR FEES PAID TO THE TRUST FOR SERVICES WHICH THE  
13 TRUST PERFORMS AS PART OF ITS NONPROFIT PURPOSES.

14 S 13. Subdivision 5 of paragraph (b) of section 8-1.9 of the estates,  
15 powers and trusts law, as added by chapter 549 of the laws of 2013, is  
16 amended to read as follows:

17 (5) Only independent trustees may participate in deliberations or  
18 voting relating to matters set forth in this [paragraph] SECTION,  
19 PROVIDED THAT NOTHING IN THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL PROHIBIT THE BOARD OR  
20 DESIGNATED AUDIT COMMITTEE FROM REQUESTING THAT A PERSON WITH AN INTER-  
21 EST IN THE MATTER PRESENT INFORMATION AS BACKGROUND OR ANSWER QUESTIONS  
22 AT A COMMITTEE OR BOARD MEETING PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF DELIBER-  
23 ATIONS OR VOTING RELATING THERETO.

24 S 14. Subdivision 6 of paragraph (c) of section 8-1.9 of the estates,  
25 powers and trusts law, as added by chapter 549 of the laws of 2013, is  
26 amended to read as follows:

27 (6) No related party may participate in deliberations or voting relat-  
28 ing to [matters set forth in this paragraph] A RELATED PARTY TRANSACTION  
29 IN WHICH HE OR SHE HAS AN INTEREST; provided that nothing in this  
30 section shall prohibit the trustees or designated audit committee from  
31 requesting that a related party present information OR ANSWER QUESTIONS  
32 concerning a related party transaction at a trustees or committee meet-  
33 ing prior to the commencement of deliberations or voting relating to the  
34 related party transaction.

35 S 15. Clause (C) of subdivision 2 of paragraph (d) of section 8-1.9 of  
36 the estates, powers and trusts law, as added by chapter 549 of the laws  
37 of 2013, is amended to read as follows:

38 (C) a requirement that the person with the conflict of interest not be  
39 present at or participate in any deliberation or vote on the matter  
40 giving rise to such conflict, PROVIDED THAT NOTHING IN THIS SECTION  
41 SHALL PROHIBIT THE TRUSTEES OR A COMMITTEE FROM REQUESTING THAT THE  
42 PERSON WITH THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST PRESENT INFORMATION AS BACKGROUND  
43 OR ANSWER QUESTIONS AT A TRUSTEES OR COMMITTEE MEETING PRIOR TO THE  
44 COMMENCEMENT OF DELIBERATIONS OR VOTING RELATING THERETO;

45 S 16. Clause (C) of paragraph 2 of subdivision (e) of section 8-1.9 of  
46 the estates, powers and trusts law, as added by chapter 549 of the laws  
47 of 2013, is amended to read as follows:

48 (C) A requirement that a copy of the policy be distributed to all  
49 trustees, officers, employees and volunteers, with instructions on how  
50 to comply with the procedures set forth in the policy. FOR PURPOSES OF  
51 THIS SUBDIVISION, POSTING THE POLICY ON THE CORPORATION'S WEBSITE OR AT  
52 THE CORPORATION'S OFFICES IN A CONSPICUOUS LOCATION ACCESSIBLE TO  
53 EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS ARE AMONG THE METHODS A CORPORATION MAY USE TO  
54 SATISFY THE DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT.

1 S 17. Subdivision 1 of section 12 of the religious corporations law,  
2 as amended by chapter 244 of the laws of 1981, is amended to read as  
3 follows:

4 1. A religious corporation shall not sell, mortgage or lease for a  
5 term exceeding five years any of its real property without applying for  
6 and obtaining leave of the court OR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL therefor pursu-  
7 ant to section five hundred eleven of the not-for-profit corporation law  
8 as that section is modified by paragraph (d-1) of [subsection] SUBDIVI-  
9 SION one of section two-b of this chapter OR SECTION FIVE HUNDRED  
10 ELEVEN-A OF THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATION LAW, except that a religious  
11 corporation may execute a purchase money mortgage or a purchase money  
12 security agreement creating a security interest in personal property  
13 purchased by it without obtaining leave of the court therefor.

14 S 18. Severability. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, section or  
15 part of this act shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdic-  
16 tion to be invalid, the judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate  
17 the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the  
18 clause, sentence, paragraph, section or part thereof directly involved  
19 in the controversy in which the judgment shall have been rendered.

20 S 19. This act shall take effect immediately.