

# STATE OF NEW YORK

4942--B

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

February 27, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. FORREST, TAYLOR, DARLING, HYNDMAN, LEVENBERG, SILLITTI, MAHER, SIMON, RAGA, OTIS, McDONALD, CHANDLER-WATERMAN, CLARK, PRETLOW, DE LOS SANTOS, TAPIA, ALVAREZ, GIBBS, REYES, SEPTIMO, EPSTEIN, WEPRIN, ZACCARO, STIRPE, MAMDANI, SHRESTHA -- read once and referred to the Committee on Higher Education -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing policies for the awarding of posthumous degrees

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as "Melquain  
2 Jatelle Anderson's (Mel's) Law".

3 § 2. Subdivision 2 of section 355 of the education law is amended by  
4 adding a new paragraph f-2 to read as follows:

5 f-2. Notwithstanding any law, rule or regulation to the contrary, the  
6 state university of New York board of trustees shall establish a policy  
7 authorizing state-operated institutions and community colleges within  
8 the state university to grant posthumous degrees to enrolled matriculat-  
9 ed students whose death occurs prior to graduation. Such policy shall  
10 provide that, upon terms set in the policy, any remaining credit  
11 requirements shall be waived for any student who dies and who otherwise  
12 would have been eligible for graduation had they been able to complete  
13 their academic career.

14 § 3. Section 6206 of the education law is amended by adding a new  
15 subdivision 22 to read as follows:

16 22. Notwithstanding any law, rule or regulation to the contrary, the  
17 board of trustees shall establish a policy authorizing senior colleges  
18 and community colleges within the city university of New York to grant  
19 posthumous degrees to enrolled matriculated students whose death occurs

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

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1 prior to graduation. Such policy shall provide that, upon terms set in  
2 the policy, any remaining credit requirements shall be waived for any  
3 student who dies and who otherwise would have been eligible for gradu-  
4 ation had they been able to complete their academic career.

5 § 4. Such posthumous degrees shall not be counted in the conferred  
6 degrees during the accreditation process or negatively impact a school's  
7 standing during the accreditation process.

8 § 5. This act shall take effect immediately.