

STATE OF NEW YORK

10284

IN SENATE

May 11, 2026

Introduced by Sen. MYRIE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing voluntary tiered certification and licensing for fashion designers and creating the state board of fashion design; and to amend the state finance law, in relation to permitting state contracting entities to require or give preference to certified or licensed fashion designers

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 the "Fashion
2 Design Professional Standards and Certification Act".

3 § 2. The education law is amended by adding a new article 169 to read
4 as follows:

ARTICLE 169

FASHION DESIGN

Section 8890. Definitions.

8 8891. State board for fashion design.

9 8892. Certification and licensure structure.

10 8893. Continuing education.

11 8894. Limitations and construction.

§ 8890. Definitions. As used in this section:

13 1. "fashion designer" means any individual engaged in the design,
14 development, or production of apparel, accessories, or related products.

15 2. "certification" means a voluntary credential recognizing demon-
16 strated competency in fashion design, including technical, safety, and
17 professional standards.

18 3. "licensure" means an optional state-recognized designation permit-
19 ting the use of the title "licensed fashion designer".

20 4. "board" means the New York state board for fashion design estab-
21 lished pursuant to this article.

22 § 8891. State board for fashion design. 1. There is hereby established
23 a state board for fashion design, the members of which shall be
24 appointed by the board of regents on recommendation of the commissioner
25 for the purpose of assisting the board of regents and the department on

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

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1 matters of professional licensing and professional conduct in accordance
2 with section sixty-five hundred eight of this title. An executive secre-
3 tary to the board shall be appointed by the board of regents on recom-
4 mendation of the commissioner and shall be a fashion designer licensed
5 in this state.

6 2. The board shall be composed of not less than seven fashion design-
7 ers. At least four of these seven members shall be owners or employees
8 of a small business, as defined in section one hundred thirty-one of the
9 economic development law, or freelance workers, as defined in section
10 fourteen hundred ten of the general business law.

11 3. The board shall have the following powers and duties to provide
12 assistance to the department:

13 (a) establish a voluntary certification and licensing framework for
14 fashion designers.

15 (b) develop and administer standards for certification, licensure, and
16 continuing education.

17 (c) ensure that participation in certification or licensure programs
18 shall be strictly voluntary and shall not be required for employment in
19 the fashion industry.

20 (d) maintain a public registry of individuals who hold valid certifi-
21 cation or licensure under this article.

22 (e) promulgate any rules and regulations necessary to implement this
23 article.

24 4. The board may utilize existing resources and establish reasonable
25 fees to administer certification and licensure programs.

26 § 8892. Certification and licensure structure. 1. The board shall
27 establish tiered certification levels, including:

28 (a) a general certification for entry and mid-level designers;

29 (b) specialized certifications for category-specific expertise; and

30 (c) an optional state license for qualified individuals meeting
31 advanced experience requirements.

32 2. Certification shall be based on a combination of education, work
33 experience, and successful completion of an approved examination.

34 3. The board may approve or recognize independent accrediting bodies
35 to establish educational and training standards.

36 § 8893. Continuing education. The board shall establish continuing
37 education requirements for certified and licensed individuals. Such
38 requirements shall include, but not be limited to, instruction in emerg-
39 ing technologies, sustainability, product safety, and professional
40 ethics. Continuing education may be satisfied through approved courses
41 or employer sponsored programs.

42 § 8894. Limitations and construction. Nothing in this article shall be
43 construed to:

44 (a) require any individual to obtain certification or licensure to
45 practice fashion design.

46 (b) restrict freelance, artistic, or small business practices.

47 (c) create a private right of action against fashion designers based
48 solely on certification status.

49 § 3. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 136-e to
50 read as follows:

51 § 136-e. Contracts involving fashion design. For contracts involving
52 fashion design products or services, contracting entities may require or
53 give preference to fashion designers holding certification or licensure
54 issued pursuant to article one hundred sixty-nine of the education law.

55 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.