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:

Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Fashion Design Professional Standards and Certification Act".

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

ARTICLE 169
FASHION DESIGN

Section 8890. Definitions.
8891. State board for fashion design.
8892. Certification and licensure structure.
8893. Continuing education.
8894. Limitations and construction.

§ 8890. Definitions. As used in this section:

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

2. "certification" means a voluntary credential recognizing demonstrated competency in fashion design, including technical, safety, and professional standards.

3. "licensure" means an optional state-recognized designation permitting the use of the title "licensed fashion designer".

4. "board" means the New York state board for fashion design established pursuant to this article.

§ 8891. State board for fashion design. 1. There is hereby established a state board for fashion design, the members of which shall be appointed by the board of regents on recommendation of the commissioner 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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matters of professional licensing and professional conduct in accordance with section sixty-five hundred eight of this title. An executive secretary to the board shall be appointed by the board of regents on recommendation of the commissioner and shall be a fashion designer licensed in this state.

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

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

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

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

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

(d) maintain a public registry of individuals who hold valid certification or licensure under this article.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.