



EMPIRE STATE SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

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June 7, 2023

Representative Fahey
Legislative Office Building, Room 913
Albany, NY 12247

Re: Assembly Bill 2033

Dear Representative Fahey,

We are writing to you as the attorneys representing the interests of the Empire State Supervisors and Administrators Association (ESSAA). Our union strongly supports Assembly Bill 2033, which is currently pending in the New York State Assembly, and we believe this legislation is critical in addressing the urgent need for qualified mental health professionals in our PK-12 public school system. Given the importance and urgency of this matter, we respectfully request that you take immediate action to release Assembly Bill 2033 to the Rules Committee.

Assembly Bill 2033 presents a comprehensive solution to the current shortage of licensed school psychologists by providing for their licensure, establishing clear definitions for the practice of school psychology, and setting forth rigorous requirements for professional licensure. One of the most salient aspects of this bill is the provision for the issuance of limited permits under specific circumstances. This allows emerging professionals to gain valuable experience while working towards full licensure, ultimately helping to fill the gap in our schools' mental health support system.

The introduction of limited permits is an innovative strategy that stands to make a considerable impact on the availability of qualified professionals in our schools. Not only does this provision provide an avenue for professionals to gain practical experience, but it also increases the overall capacity of our school systems to provide much-needed mental health support to students and families. The increased presence of school psychologists as a result of this bill will contribute to a more equitable educational environment, especially within traditionally underserved communities.

In addition to the limited permits, the bill's other provisions, including the clear definition of the practice of school psychology and the rigorous requirements for professional licensure, are also critical for ensuring that our students receive high-quality mental health support from competent and qualified professionals.

Furthermore, we believe that Assembly Bill 2033's passage is essential in the context of the ongoing discussion surrounding Senate Bill 1040, known as the "Judith Kaye School Solutions not Suspensions Act." The proposed reforms to school discipline policies, as outlined in Senate Bill 1040, cannot be fully realized without a concomitant increase in the presence of qualified mental health professionals in our schools, a need that Assembly Bill 2033 directly addresses.

Given the importance and urgency of this matter, we respectfully request that you take immediate action to release Assembly Bill 2033 to the Rules Committee. Your support for this legislation will make a meaningful difference in the lives of our students and families, and we urge you to act swiftly in facilitating its passage.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to your positive response.

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael A. Starvaggi, Esq.

Mr. Robert Saperstein, Esq.

Mr. Brad A. Stuhler, Esq.

Ms. Karen Khanzadian, Esq.

Mr. Paul A. Pagano, Esq.

Attorneys for Empire State Supervisors & Administrators Association (ESSAA)