



SUPPORT

S. 3165 Saland

AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION LAW, IN RELATION TO IMMUNIZATIONS REQUIRED FOR ENTERING OR ATTENDING SCHOOL AND TO REPEAL CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF SUCH LAW RELATING THERETO.

The New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO), representing all 58 local health departments in New York State, supports the above referenced legislation, which would update the language in section 914 of the education law to be consistent with the language in section 2164 of the public health law regarding immunization requirements for students.

Currently, section 914 of the education law does not include pertussis and tetanus immunizations in the list of required immunizations of every child entering or attending school. Chapter 207 of the laws of 2004 amends section 2164 of the public health law to include pertussis and tetanus in the list of immunizations required for children entering school.

Pertussis or whooping cough is an acute infectious disease which had been one of the most common childhood diseases and a major cause of childhood mortality in the U.S. until widespread use of a pertussis vaccine. With widespread use of the vaccine, incidence has decreased more than 98%. In unimmunized populations, pertussis remains a major health problem with an estimated 300,000 deaths per year due to the disease.

Given the potential for serious morbidity and mortality due to pertussis disease, and the growing anti-vaccine movement in certain communities, the absence of a school requirement specifically for pertussis vaccination allows for the existence of a potentially vulnerable population to this disease.

Furthermore, this legislation would ensure that the education law will always be up-to-date with the public health law. This bill would eliminate the list of required immunizations for school children in the education law by referring parents and educators to the public health law for this list. It is much more appropriate and efficient for the list of required immunizations for students be contained in the public health law.

Therefore, NYSACHO strongly supports S. 3165 and recommends the Senate support passage of this bill.

Senate Education Committee
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