

New York State Educational Conference Board



Students for Solar Act

S.1986 (Harckham)/A.6318 (Griffin)

The New York State Educational Conference Board — comprised of the Association of School Business Officials, Conference of Big 5 School Districts, New York State Council of School Superintendents, New York State PTA, New York State School Boards Association, New York State United Teachers, and the School Administrators Association of New York State — strongly supports this legislation and encourages your approval.

School districts enter into energy performance contracts when energy performance contractors implement energy-saving measures and guarantee that the resulting savings will cover project costs. Under existing state law, the statutory limit of energy performance contracts is 18 years. This legislation extends that time-period to 25 years, unlocking the potential for more schools, who are major energy consumers, to invest in clean energy infrastructure.

Outdated regulations currently prevent school districts from entering energy performance contracts with cost recovery periods longer than 18 years — a restriction that effectively blocks most solar, wind and geothermal projects, which typically require 20 to 25 years to become cost-effective.

This change will update this policy by extending the allowable cost recovery period to 25 years — aligning state law with current federal standards for these contracts. This will enable schools to achieve long-term savings on utility costs, revitalize aging school infrastructure, increase renovation accessibility in low-income areas and reduce greenhouse gas emissions across school campuses.

The passage of this bill will remove a key barrier to progress and ensure that our schools are equipped to contribute meaningfully to the state's climate and energy goals.

Therefore, our organizations fully support this legislation and urge you to do the same before this year's legislative session is complete.