

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 95

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 22, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator PATRICK J. DIEGNAN, JR.

District 18 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Urges DOE to identify and evaluate cleaning products, methods, and devices available to address transmission of COVID-19 in school buildings.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A SENATE RESOLUTION** urging the Department of Education to
 2 identify and evaluate cleaning products, methods, and devices
 3 that can be used to address the transmission of COVID-19 in
 4 school buildings.

5
 6 **WHEREAS**, The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has
 7 significantly impacted the lives of all New Jersey residents,
 8 including students and their families; and

9 **WHEREAS**, Following the outbreak of COVID-19 in New Jersey, the
 10 Governor declared a state of emergency and a public health
 11 emergency under Executive Order No. 103 and under Executive
 12 Order No. 104 ordered the closure of all public, private, and
 13 parochial schools in the State, with students completing the 2019-
 14 2020 school year remotely; and

15 **WHEREAS**, There have been over 197,000 confirmed cases of COVID-
 16 19 and over 16,000 deaths attributable to COVID-19 in New Jersey;
 17 and

18 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey residents have worked hard to “flatten the
 19 curve” and reduce COVID-19 transmission rates across the State by
 20 practicing social distancing, wearing protective face coverings, and
 21 following recommended health protocols; and

22 **WHEREAS**, As the State has successfully lowered the transmission
 23 rate, the Department of Education (DOE) issued guidance for the
 24 reopening of schools for the 2020-2021 school year; and

25 **WHEREAS**, The department’s guidance, “The Road Back: Restart and
 26 Recovery Plan for Education,” directed that schools provide some
 27 capacity for in-person instruction; and

28 **WHEREAS**, As schools reopen and students and families begin to
 29 interact in person with school staff and other students and parents, it
 30 is imperative that they follow the guidelines established by the
 31 DOE and the advice of health experts to prevent the spread of
 32 COVID-19 in our schools and the community at large; and

33 **WHEREAS**, Keeping school buildings thoroughly cleaned and sanitized
 34 is one way school districts can help protect students and families
 35 from possible exposure to COVID-19; and

36 **WHEREAS**, The DOE can play an important role in this effort by
 37 identifying cleaning products, methods, and devices that may be
 38 available to sanitize school facilities, evaluating their effectiveness,
 39 and making this information available to school districts; now,
 40 therefore,

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 42 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

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 44 1. The Department of Education is urged to immediately
 45 identify and evaluate cleaning products, methods, and devices
 46 which are approved by the Centers for Disease Control and
 47 Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, and the
 48 Environmental Protection Agency for use in school buildings to

1 limit the transmission of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)
 2 including, but not limited to, ultraviolet-C lights, air filtration
 3 systems, and medical washers and upon the completion of that
 4 evaluation, to compile and release a list of those products, methods,
 5 and devices which the department determines would be effective
 6 and safe for use in school buildings.

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 8 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
 9 shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the
 10 Commissioner of Education.

11
 12
 13 STATEMENT
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15 This Senate resolution urges the Department of Education (DOE)
 16 to identify and evaluate cleaning products, methods, and devices
 17 which are approved by the Centers for Disease Control and
 18 Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, and the
 19 Environmental Protection Agency for use in school buildings for
 20 the purpose of addressing the spread of the coronavirus disease
 21 2019 (COVID-19). Upon the completion of its evaluation, the
 22 department is urged to release to school districts a list of those
 23 products, methods, and devices that it determines to be effective
 24 and safe.

25 With the arrival of COVID-19 in New Jersey, the Governor
 26 declared a state of emergency and a public health emergency under
 27 Executive Order No. 103. Under Executive Order No. 104 the
 28 Governor ordered the closure of all public, private, and parochial
 29 schools, and students completed the 2019-2020 school year with a
 30 program of remote instruction.

31 As the State was able to flatten the curve of disease infection and
 32 lower the rate of transmission, the DOE issued guidelines for the
 33 reopening of schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Under those
 34 guidelines, schools are directed to provide some capacity for in-
 35 person instruction. As school district staff and students and their
 36 families resume some level of direct contact, it is imperative that
 37 school districts take all possible steps to limit the transmission of
 38 COVID-19. In addition to the guidelines established by the DOE
 39 and the public health measures recommended by public health
 40 experts, such as social distancing and face coverings, the cleaning
 41 and sanitizing of school facilities will be a critical component of
 42 those efforts. The DOE can play an important role to assist schools
 43 by evaluating and recommending to districts those sanitizing
 44 products, methods, and devices that it deems safe and effective.