

THE NEW YORK ASCENT & RENAISSANCE ACT - NY ARA

A Statutory Interface for the Empire State

THE CRISIS:

- **Administrative Friction:** Our court system and the mechanics of local and state government can improve. Permits for infrastructure can be expedited.
- **Housing Instability:** Citizens sign contracts they may not understand, leading to avoidable litigation and evictions that cost the State billions in shelter costs.
- **Infrastructure Decay:** Our infrastructure is aging and requires repair or replacement.

THE SOLUTION: A revenue positive Service & Education mandate that mobilizes the youth of New York to secure the economic defense of the State.

I. THE SERVICE COMMISSION - Article 26-A

THE EMPIRE GUARD - Statutory Navigators

- **Mission:** Deployed to Housing and Civil Courts to review filings before they reach the docket.
- **Impact:** Reduces the eviction backlog, ensures compliance with the Housing Stability & Tenant Protection Act, and lowers administrative friction for the Judiciary.

THE CIVIC CORPS - Resilience Teams

- **Mission:** Deployed to Civic Deserts and rural communities.
- **Impact:** Establishes Strategic Biotic Reserve and Agrarian Defense Hubs (community gardens) and staffs emergency warming centers during extreme weather events.

THE INDUSTRIAL GUARD - Grid Hardening

- **Mission:** Vocational apprentices dedicated to physical infrastructure.
- **The Mandate:** Enforces the Green Tape Protocol 45 day permit period for projects using materials certified for a 100 Year Operational Life.

II. THE EDUCATION MANDATE - Title II

Statutory Fluency for Every Graduate.

- Amends Education Law to mandate instruction in **Contractual Defense, AI Literacy, and Housing Law.**
- **The Goal:** Prevention. By teaching students how to read a contract and calculate debt interest before they graduate, we prevent poverty before it starts.

THE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MODEL

SELF-FUNDING ARCHITECTURE. REVENUE POSITIVE.

- **Sustainability:** Funded entirely by a \$15 Statutory Oversight Surcharge (CPLR § 8023) on landlord tenant and civil filings.
- **The Logic:** A User Fee model where the administrative activity of the courts funds the solution to court congestion.
- **The Lockbox:** Revenue is deposited into the Empire Guard Trust Fund (State Finance Law § 99-zz), held in joint custody by the Comptroller to prevent legislative raids.

POLITICAL & LABOR SAFETY

- **Union Safe:** Explicitly Excluded from the Taylor Law - Section 729. Fellows are Statutory Volunteers, not public employees.
- **Job Protection:** Includes a strict Civil Service Fortification Clause - Section 733, Fellows cannot replace existing state workers.
- **Liability Protection:** Fellows are indemnified by the State (Public Officers Law § 17), protecting school districts and municipalities from lawsuits.

REQUEST: Sponsorship of S.____ / A.____

**NEW YORK STATE SENATE
MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION**

BILL NUMBER: Senate , Assembly
SPONSOR: _____

AN ACT to amend the education law, the executive law, the civil practice law and rules, the state finance law, and the civil service law, in relation to establishing the **New York Ascent & Renaissance**, creating the **Empire Guard** and **Civic Corps**, mandating Statutory Fluency, and dedicating funds for the economic defense of the State.

PURPOSE: To mobilize the talent of New York’s youth to solve the state’s most persistent structural liabilities: administrative backlog, housing instability, and critical infrastructure decay. This bill establishes a Statutory Interface, a dedicated, self funded service corps that harmonizes New York law with the federal American Economic Defense Act, ensuring the Empire State remains the gold standard of civic resilience.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS:

Title II: The Education Mandate - Statutory Fluency

- Amends the Education Law to mandate instruction in **Contractual Defense, Housing Law, and AI Literacy** for all public high school students.
- Establishes the **Empire Seal of Statutory Fluency** as a graduation credential, granting holders priority access to the Empire Guard.

Title III: The Service Commission - Article 26-A

- **The Structure:** Establishes the **New York Service Commission** to oversee three service divisions:
 1. **The Empire Guard:** Statutory Navigators deployed to courts to expedite filings and reduce case backlogs.
 2. **The Civic Corps:** Resilience Teams deployed to secure local food systems, Agrarian Defense Hubs and harden digital infrastructure for vulnerable populations.
 3. **The Industrial Guard:** Vocational apprentices deployed to harden the electrical grid using 100 year durability materials.
- **The Green Tape Protocol:** Grants Permitting Authority (Section 727) to the Industrial Guard, mandating a 45 day approval period for critical resilience projects, overriding obstruction.
- **Labor & Liability:** Defines Fellows as Statutory Volunteers (exempt from Taylor Law/Unemployment) but provides State Indemnification (Public Officers Law § 17) and Workers' Compensation coverage.

Title IV: Sustainability

- **Revenue:** Establishes a \$15 Statutory Oversight Surcharge (CPLR § 8023) on all civil and landlord tenant filings in Supreme, Civil, District, City, and Town/Village courts.
- **The Trust Fund:** Creates the Empire Guard Trust Fund (State Finance Law § 99-zz) in the joint custody of the State Comptroller to hold these revenues.
- **Use of Funds:** Strictly dedicated to Corps operations and school grants.

Title V: Civil Service Benefits

- Grants Graduates of the Empire Guard three (3) additional credits on Civil Service exams, applied after Veterans' credits (Section 85-c), creating a pipeline from service to permanent state employment.

JUSTIFICATION:

1. The Economic Defense Imperative - New York faces a crisis of Administrative Friction. Our courts can improve, our permitting system can be more efficient, and our grid is aging. We need human power. The Empire Guard provides a disciplined, high velocity workforce to clear the backlogs that stifle our economy.

2. The Statutory Fluency Solution - We are sending our children into a complex economy without a map. They may sign leases they may not understand and debt instruments they can't calculate. By mandating Statutory Fluency, we arm the next generation with the knowledge of legal literacy, preventing poverty before it begins.

3. Fiscal Sustainability - This program imposes zero cost on the General Fund. It is funded entirely by a modest \$15 surcharge on civil filings, effectively a user fee paid by those utilizing the court system.

4. The Long Term Infrastructure Standard - We can no longer build infrastructure that lasts only 30 years. This bill mandates a 100 Year Durability Standard for all Industrial Guard projects, utilizing advanced self healing materials. This is a fiduciary duty to future taxpayers.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

This new bill is modeled upon the federal American Economic Defense Act, positioning New York as the first Affiliate Unit in the national economic defense framework.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: REVENUE POSITIVE.

This bill carries no appropriation risk to the State General Fund.

- **Operational Costs:** Fully offset by the Statutory Oversight Surcharge (CPLR § 8023).
- **Legacy Costs:** Explicitly excludes Fellows from the State Pension System and retiree health benefits (Section 729).
- **Liability Costs:** Mitigated by the exclusion from Unemployment Insurance (Labor Law Art. 18) and Minimum Wage mandates (Labor Law Art. 19).

EFFECTIVE DATE:

This act shall take effect immediately, provided, the Surcharge (Section 7) shall take effect on the first day of the fiscal quarter next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law to allow for court system updates.

The ultimate defense of the State is the competence of its Citizenry.

STATE OF NEW YORK

LEGISLATURE 2026 REGULAR SESSION PROPOSED LEGISLATION - NY ARA 2026

THE NEW YORK ASCENT & RENAISSANCE ACT NY ARA

AN ACT to amend the education law, the executive law, the civil practice law and rules, the state finance law, and the civil service law, in relation to establishing the New York Ascent & Renaissance, creating the Empire Guard and Civic Corps, mandating Statutory Fluency, and dedicating funds for the economic defense of the State.

SPONSORSHIP

SENATE SPONSOR: Senator _____

ASSEMBLY SPONSOR: Member of Assembly _____

EXECUTIVE ABSTRACT: THE STATUTORY INTERFACE

I. THE EDUCATION MANDATE - TITLE II

Establishes the Empire Seal of Statutory Fluency and mandates instruction in Contractual Defense, Housing Stability, and AI Literacy for all public high school students.

II. THE SERVICE COMMISSION - TITLE III

Creates Article 26-A of the Executive Law, establishing the Empire Guard (Legal Defense), the Civic Corps, Resilience & Food Security, and the Industrial Guard, Grid Hardening. Grants the Commission Permitting Authority (Section 727) to bypass local obstruction for critical infrastructure.

III. SUSTAINABILITY - TITLE IV

Establishes the Empire Guard Trust Fund (State Finance Law § 99-zz) in the joint custody of the Comptroller. Fully self funded through a \$15 Statutory Oversight Surcharge (CPLR § 8023) on civil filings statewide.

COMPLIANCE & FISCAL STATUS

- **TAYLOR LAW: EXCLUDED** - Statutory Volunteers.
- **PROCUREMENT: OPEN STANDARD** - Performance based.
- **FISCAL IMPACT: REVENUE POSITIVE** - Self-funding architecture.
- **JUDICIAL: COMPLIANT** - Legislative Law § 50 Note Attached.

Forging a Statutory Interface between the vigor of our youth and the resilience of our **Republic**.

SUBMITTED FOR INTRODUCTION
ALBANY, NEW YORK

STATE OF NEW YORK
S. _____ A. _____
2026 Regular Session

IN SENATE
IN ASSEMBLY

Introduced by, read once and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

AN ACT to amend the education law, the executive law, the civil practice law and rules, the state finance law, and the civil service law, in relation to establishing the New York Ascent & Renaissance, creating the Empire Guard and Civic Corps, mandating Statutory Fluency, and dedicating funds for the economic defense of the State.

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

TITLE I: PREAMBLE & INTENT

Section 1. Title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the New York Ascent & Renaissance Act (NY ARA).

§ 2. Legislative findings and declaration of state concern.

The legislature finds that administrative delay, housing instability, and infrastructure decay constitute threats to the general welfare. The legislature declares that the crisis of housing capability and the hardening of our infrastructure grid are matters of substantial state concern, necessitating a comprehensive, statewide approach that transcends local boundaries.

Therefore, this act establishes a "Statutory Interface" between the Citizen and the State, harmonizing New York law with the federal American Economic Defense Act.

TITLE II: THE EDUCATION MANDATE - STATUTORY FLUENCY

§ 3. Section 801-a of the education law is amended by adding a new subdivision 4 to read as follows:

4. Statutory Fluency and Economic Defense.

(a) Mandate. All public high schools shall include instruction in Statutory Fluency, Contractual Defense, and Artificial Intelligence Literacy.

(b) Curriculum Alignment. The curriculum shall align with the Model Statutory Fluency Standard established by the federal National Center for Statutory Fluency.

(c) Core Competencies. The instruction shall include:

(i) Housing Stability: A comparative analysis of the Standard New York Residential Lease, the Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act of 2019, Article 6-A of the Real Property Law ("Good Cause Eviction"), and the identification of illegal lease clauses.

- (ii) Labor Sovereignty: The legal distinction between Employee and Independent Contractor, specifically reviewing the New York Construction Industry Fair Play Act.
 - (iii) Debt & Equity Defense: Instruction on economic defense strategies: understanding the Homestead Exemption (CPLR § 5206), the detection of Predatory Arbitration Clauses, and the mathematical analysis of Deferred Interest.
 - (iv) AI Literacy: Instruction on the identification of algorithmic bias, deepfakes, and digital fraud.
 - (v) Contracts: Instruction on General Contract clauses.
- (d) The Living Curriculum. The Commissioner, in consultation with the Superintendent of Financial Services, shall annually review and update this curriculum no later than August 1st of each year.

§ 4. The education law is amended by adding a new section 801-b to read as follows:

§ 801-b. The Empire Seal of Statutory Fluency.

1. Establishment. There is established the "Empire Seal of Statutory Fluency" to recognize graduates who attain high proficiency in economic and legal self defense.
2. Credential. The Seal shall be issued as a digitally verifiable credential compatible with the federal Crest Registry.
3. Service Pipeline. Earning the Seal shall grant the student Priority Status for admission into the Empire Guard.

§ 5. The education law is amended by adding a new section 3028-e to read as follows:

§ 3028-e. Immunity for Statutory Fluency Instruction.

No cause of action shall arise against any school district or employee thereof for any loss or damage caused by an act or omission resulting from the implementation of the Statutory Fluency curriculum. The instruction shall be deemed educational information and shall not constitute the practice of law.

TITLE III: THE SERVICE COMMISSION

§ 6. The executive law is amended by adding a new article 26-A to read as follows:

ARTICLE 26-A

THE NEW YORK SERVICE COMMISSION AND EMPIRE GUARD

Section 720. Definitions.

As used in this article, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

1. "Commission" shall mean the New York Service Commission established by section seven hundred twenty-one of this article.
2. "Corps" or "Guard" shall mean the Empire Guard, the Civic Corps, and the Industrial Guard collectively.
3. "Fellow" shall mean any individual commissioned to serve in the Corps.

4. "Civic Desert" shall mean a municipality or geographic area designated by the Commission as lacking sufficient administrative or social infrastructure.
5. "Digital Hardening Zone" shall mean a demographic group or geographic area designated by the Commission as highly vulnerable to cyber exploitation or algorithmic fraud.
6. "Ascent Suite" shall mean a residential unit certified by the New York Service Commission.

Section 721. Establishment.

There is established in the executive department, the New York Service Commission.

Section 722. Composition and Leadership.

1. Members. The commission shall consist of (5) five members serving staggered (5) five year terms, appointed as follows:
 - (a) Three members appointed by the Governor,
 - (b) One member appointed by the Temporary President of the Senate, and
 - (c) One member appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.
2. Chairperson. The Governor shall designate one of the appointees as the Chairperson.
3. Executive Director. The Commission shall appoint an Executive Director to manage the daily operations of the Empire Guard.
4. First Meeting. The Commission shall hold its first official meeting no later than ninety days after the effective date of this article.

Section 723. The Red Team Audit.

Every four (4) years, an independent Red Team shall stress test the Corps' financial and operational systems.

Section 724. The Empire Guard.

1. Mission. A selective, uniformed division serving as "Statutory Navigators."
2. Intake Command. Subject to the rules of the Chief Administrative Judge, Navigators shall perform intake duties to ensure filings comply with the RPAPL.
3. UPL Exemption. Notwithstanding Judiciary Law § 478, administrative assistance provided by commissioned Fellows shall not constitute the unauthorized practice of law.

Section 725. The Civic Corps.

1. Mission. A general service division for college students serving in Civic Deserts and Digital Hardening Zones.
2. Strategic Biotic Reserve and Agrarian Defense Hubs. The Corps shall establish "Victory Garden 2.0" Centers (hydroponic/soil) to ensure local food security.
3. Civic Infrastructure Hardening. The Corps shall deploy teams to harden community resilience, including:
 - (a) Emergency Logistics: Staffing warming centers, distributing supplies, and executing sandbagging operations during state emergencies; and

(b) Digital Defense: Assisting vulnerable populations in securing their digital identity and defending against algorithmic fraud.

Section 726. The Industrial Guard.

1. Mission. A vocational division dedicated to grid hardening and logistics.
2. The Long Term Standard. Any project executed by the Guard must utilize advanced, self healing, or high durability materials certified for a 100 year operational life.
3. The Digital Twin. Every Long Term project must be paired with a "Digital Twin" ledger maintained by the Commission.

Section 727. The Green Tape Protocol.

1. Priority Review. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, all permitting applications filed by the Industrial Guard, Strategic Biotic Reserve, or for projects utilizing 100 year materials shall be rendered a final decision by the relevant municipal or state agency within forty-five (45) days.
2. Deemed Approved. Failure to render a decision within such period shall result in the application being "Deemed Approved," contingent upon a final safety review by the Commission.

Section 728. Service Benefits.

1. Statutory Volunteer Status. Fellows shall be classified as "Statutory Volunteers" receiving a stipend, and shall not be deemed "public employees" as defined in Article 14 of the Civil Service Law (The Taylor Law), nor shall they be eligible for benefits under Article 18 or Article 19 of the Labor Law (Unemployment and Minimum Wage) or membership in any public employee retirement system.
2. Workers' Compensation. Notwithstanding subdivision one, Fellows shall be deemed employees for the sole purpose of coverage under the Workers' Compensation Law.
3. Health Coverage. All Fellows serving more than 20 hours per week shall receive health coverage including mental health counseling.

Section 730. Service to Equity Bridge.

1. Housing Grant Definition. "Ascent Credits" are hereby defined as Sovereign Housing Grants and shall not constitute pensionable earnings.
2. The 40 Year Goal. A career spanning forty (40) years of cumulative service shall entitle the Fellow to 80% Home Equity in a state certified "Ascent Suite."

Section 731. Sovereign Standards.

1. Data Sovereignty. Biometric data of Fellows is a "Sovereign Asset" and shall not be sold.
2. Solar Envelope Zoning. The Corps shall enforce "Solar Envelope" zoning standards.
3. Heirloom Sovereignty. The Commission shall maintain a "State Heirloom Seed Bank."

4. Analog Anchor. The Commission shall maintain a physical, archival grade hard copy ledger of all credits and seals within the New York State Archives, serving as the "Gold Copy."
5. Conduct. The Commission reserves the right to revoke the "Empire Seal" and claw back unredeemed Ascent Credits from any Fellow convicted of a felony involving public corruption or a breach of the Oath of Service.

Section 732. Federal Interoperability.

The Commission is directed to petition for "Affiliate Unit" status under the federal American Economic Defense Act.

Section 733. Civil Service Fortification and Labor Neutrality.

The activities of the Empire Guard shall not result in the displacement of any currently employed worker, the loss of position, or the impairment of existing contracts for services.

Section 734. Security of Critical Infrastructure.

Notwithstanding article six of the public officers law (FOIL), any Digital Twin, structural schematic, or vulnerability assessment generated by the Industrial Guard shall be exempt from public disclosure.

Section 735. Defense and Indemnification.

The members of the Commission and the Fellows of the Empire Guard shall be deemed "employees" of the state for the sole purpose of defense and indemnification under section 17 of the Public Officers law.

Section 736. Rules, Regulations, and Reporting.

1. Rulemaking. The Commission shall have the power to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this article.
2. Annual Report. The Commission shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature no later than February (1st) first of each year.

TITLE IV: SUSTAINABILITY

§ 7. The civil practice law and rules is amended by adding a new section 8023 to read as follows:

§ 8023. Statutory Oversight Surcharge.

(a) Surcharge. In addition to any other fee, a surcharge of fifteen (\$15) dollars shall be charged upon the filing of any Landlord Tenant petition or civil complaint in the supreme court, the civil court of the city of New York, the district court, any city court, or any town or village court.

(b) Inflation Adjustment. The state comptroller shall adjust this surcharge every three years based on the consumer price index.

(c) Dedication. All revenues from this surcharge shall be deposited directly into the Empire Guard Trust Fund.

**§ 8. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 99-zz to read as follows:
§ 99-zz. Empire Guard Trust Fund.**

1. Establishment. There is hereby established in the joint custody of the state comptroller and the commissioner of taxation and finance a special fund to be known as the Empire Guard Trust Fund.

2. Use of Funds. Monies in this fund shall be used strictly for:

(a) The administration of the New York Service Commission and the Empire Guard; and

(b) Grants to public school districts specifically for the implementation of the Statutory Fluency curriculum.

3. Audit and Warrant. Such monies shall be payable on the audit and warrant of the state comptroller on vouchers certified or approved by the Chairperson of the Commission.

4. Covenant. The State hereby covenants that it will not repeal, revoke, or rescind the provisions of this section or transfer funds to the general fund.

TITLE V: CIVIL SERVICE BENEFITS

§ 9. The civil service law is amended by adding a new section 85-c to read as follows:

§ 85-c. Empire Guard Preference.

1. Additional Credit. Graduates of the Empire Guard shall receive three (3) additional credits on any open competitive examination.

2. Priority. Such credits shall be applied only after the application of any credits granted pursuant to section eighty-five (85) of this article.

TITLE VI: FINAL PROVISIONS

§ 10. Severability.

If any provision of this act is held invalid, the remainder shall remain in effect.

§ 11. Effective Date.

This act shall take effect immediately, provided, however, that:

(a) Section 7 (Surcharge) shall take effect on the first day of the fiscal quarter next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law; and

(b) Sections 3, 4, and 5 (Education Mandate) shall apply to school years commencing on or after the first of July next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law.

FISCAL NOTE. Pursuant to Legislative Law, Section 50: This bill establishes the "Empire Guard Trust Fund," which is self funded via the Statutory Oversight Surcharge (CPLR § 8023). It imposes no direct appropriation cost on the General Fund. The Empire Guard is explicitly excluded from the Taylor Law, Unemployment Insurance, and the State Retirement System.