

**Source:** Legislative Gazette

## Ortiz want to send message to fashion designers

by Sarah L. Evans

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In an attempt to stop the negative effects of provocative clothing on young girls, Assemblyman Felix W. Ortiz, D-Brooklyn, is preparing to introduce a bill that would discontinue state investment in companies that sell or design what he considers age-inappropriate attire.

The legislation, which was still being drafted at the end of last week, would bring awareness to the "unacceptable fashionism approach" of current clothes designers by calling on the state comptroller to yank investments by the state retirement fund in companies that manufacture, sell or design the clothing, said Ortiz.

Comptroller Tom DiNapoli's office had no immediate comment on the proposed legislation last week.

According to Ortiz, concerned parents have approached him, angry about the tight, short clothing, often emblazoned with sexually suggestive sayings, their children are exposed to in stores.

According to Ortiz's office, a 2007 American Psychological Association report written by the Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls concluded that provocative clothing often leads to low self esteem, body issues and depression.

Amanda Nickerson, associate professor in the School of Psychology at the University at Albany, was hesitant to say whether that was likely. "I wouldn't hang my hat to say something causes something else," she said.

But Nickerson did say "it wouldn't be a stretch" to assume that the clothing could correlate with unsettled body issues of younger girls.

Mary Muscari, associate professor at the Decker School of Nursing at Binghamton University, author of "Let Kids Be Kids: Rescuing Childhood," said when children are made to look like little adults, "it's kind of like saying that they really are sexual beings," often leading to sex offenders believing that as well. But she said, "It's not going to make anyone a sex offender."

Elayne Rapping, a professor of American studies specializing in media and popular culture at the University at Buffalo, said, "I definitely think that the sexualization of girls has gone way, way overboard."