



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0148-2010, **Version:** *

Res. No. 148

Resolution calling upon the State Legislature to restore proposed cuts to CUNY LEADS, an initiative designed to improve vocational readiness, academic success, career development and employment opportunities for CUNY students with disabilities.

By Council Members Cabrera, Barron, Chin, Comrie, Dickens, Dromm, Ferreras, Fidler, James, Palma, Reyna, Rodriguez, Rose, Williams, Nelson and Koo

Whereas, The Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (“VESID”) is the New York State agency that assists individuals with disabilities to obtain employment; and

Whereas, VESID helps such individuals to define a career goal and provides funding for tuition for those who qualify; and

Whereas, In an effort to reach out to students with disabilities at the university level, VESID partnered with CUNY to develop the CUNY LEADS (Linking Employment, Academics and Disability Services) program; and

Whereas, CUNY LEADS was designed to facilitate successful academic and career outcomes for students with disabilities who are enrolled in CUNY programs; and

Whereas, CUNY students with disabilities who are currently registered in degree or non-degree programs, Adult and Continuing Education programs and Allied programs may participate in CUNY LEADS; and

Whereas, CUNY LEADS provides eligible students with services including career counseling, job seeking skills, job placement assistance, free textbooks, internship assistance, and training regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act; and

Whereas, Each CUNY campus has a LEADS counselor assigned to partner with various agencies and

businesses to provide the necessary assistance to students; and

Whereas, According to an article in the *Queens Chronicle*, the employment rate for CUNY LEADS participants is 72%, versus the 56% national employment rate for people with disabilities; and

Whereas, The *Queens Chronicle* also reports that the average starting hourly wage for CUNY LEADS participants is 35 percent higher than that of non-LEADS participants; and

Whereas, The State proposes to eliminate the annual \$2 million funding to the program in July 2010, which would impact crucial services, especially job placement services, to 1,600 CUNY students with disabilities; and

Whereas, CUNY LEADS has proven to be successful and the elimination of funding to this vital program would be devastating to a vulnerable population faced with many challenges and limited academic and career opportunities; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the State Legislature to restore proposed cuts to CUNY LEADS, an initiative designed to improve vocational readiness, academic success, career development and employment opportunities for CUNY students with disabilities.

LS #760
3/18/10
11:58 a.m.
TC