



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0585-2002, **Version:** *

Res. No. 585

Resolution urging the city and state to continue funding the City University of New York at current levels so as to avoid tuition increases, cuts to important financial aid programs such as the TAP, SEEK and College Discovery Programs, and the Peter F. Vallone Academic Scholarship program, and thus avoid unjustly balancing the city and state budgets on the backs of college students and their families, and calling upon the Mayor of New York City, the Governor of New York State, and the New York State Legislature to increase financial support for higher education, hold the line on tuition increases, and ensure the future of the CUNY senior and community colleges and educational institutions that provide a crucial and viable economic workforce and tax base for this city and state.

By Council Members Barron, Baez, Boyland, Davis, Foster, Gennaro, Jackson, McMahon, Perkins, Recchia, Sears, Stewart, Vann, Comrie, Brewer, Lopez, and The Public Advocate (Ms. Gotbaum); also Council Member Seabrook

Whereas, High-quality, affordable, and accessible higher education is vital for all New Yorkers, despite the current burden upon the students of the City University of New York ("CUNY" or "the University"), who carry seventy-five percent (75%) more of the fiscal responsibility for the University's funding than did their counterparts ten years ago; and
Whereas, Today's CUNY students and their families pay more for higher education, while getting less for essential programs and bearing more of the burden for public higher education due to the decline in state support; and
Whereas, According to a report issued in September of 2002 by the New York Public Interest Research Group entitled Shifting the Burden (the "Report"), currently, New York State has the fourteenth most expensive four-year public colleges of any state in the nation and the fifth most expensive public community colleges in the nation; and
Whereas, According to the Report, between 1990 and 2000, the cost of average tuition and fees for higher education in New York State skyrocketed by 97%, adjusted for inflation, while state funding for higher education declined by 22%, adjusted for inflation; and
Whereas, New York state is ranked the third worst of all fifty states in its proportion of tax dollars spent on higher education, with a mere increase of 12% in tax dollars, while the national growth averages 62% for the same period; and
Whereas, Certain CUNY opportunity programs, such as the Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge ("SEEK") and College Discovery, which are designed to assist the most financially and academically needy students, currently operate at 1994 budget levels; and
Whereas, As a result of the continuing decline in funding, CUNY has lost hundreds of full-time faculty lines since 1990; and
Whereas, In 1995, tuition rates at public colleges were raised by \$750 in New York State at institutions such as CUNY, resulting in a drop in undergraduate college enrollment by approximately 29,000 students and the slashing of college opportunity programs such as the Tuition Assistance Program ("TAP"), further jeopardized access to higher education for New York's neediest students; and
Whereas, Although the city and state face difficult budgetary decisions, these governmental entities have the responsibility to provide access to higher education at CUNY, and must not balance their budgets on the backs of college students and their families; now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the city and state to continue funding the City University of New York at current levels so as to avoid tuition increases, cuts to important financial aid programs such as the TAP, SEEK and College Discovery Programs, and the Peter F. Vallone Academic Scholarship program, and thus avoid unjustly balancing the city and state budgets on the backs of college students and their families; and, be it further Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urgently calls upon the Mayor of New York City, the Governor of New York State, and the New York State Legislature to increase financial support for higher education, hold the line on tuition increases, and ensure the future of the CUNY senior and community colleges and educational institutions that provide a crucial and viable economic workforce and tax base for this city and state.

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