

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



COMMITTEE ON
HIGHER EDUCATION

CARL E. HEASTIE
SPEAKER

DEBORAH J. GLICK
CHAIR



DEBORAH J. GLICK
Assemblymember 66TH District
New York County

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

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December 15, 2020

The Honorable Carl E. Heastie, Speaker
New York State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 349
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Speaker Heastie:

On behalf of the members of the Assembly Committee on Higher Education, I respectfully submit to you the Committee's 2020 Annual Report, which highlights our activities over the past year.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Legislative Session proved to be a challenging, yet productive one. The 2020-21 enacted budget for higher education provided an additional \$30.1 million in funding for the State University of New York (SUNY) and \$52.7 million for the City University of New York (CUNY) over the Executive's proposal.

The Legislature restored \$1.5 million to the School of Labor and Urban Studies, formerly known as the Joseph Murphy Institute, for a total of \$3.6 million in funding. The Legislature also restored \$250,000 for the CUNY Pipeline at the Graduate Center, \$500,000 for telecounseling and mental health services at SUNY, \$1.1 million to SUNY child care centers, \$902,000 to CUNY child care centers and \$2.5 million for CUNY's Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP).

The Legislature maintained state support for community colleges at prior-year levels of \$2,947 for each full-time equivalent (FTE) student. The enacted budget also maintained funding for critical opportunity programs, including: \$32.2 million for the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP); \$28.1 million for the Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge (SEEK) Program; \$1.3 million for the College Discovery Program; \$35.5 million for the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP); \$18.4 million for the Liberty Partnership Program (LPP); \$15.8 million for the Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP); and \$11.9 million for the Collegiate-STEP (CSTEP) Program. Finally, the Legislature maintained funding for the Foster Youth College Success Initiative, providing a total of \$6 million.

The Committee's efforts were not limited to fiscal concerns. In fact, the 2020 Legislative Session addressed several pressing issues prompted by the COVID-19 public health emergency, including enactment of legislation that would authorize licensed pharmacists to administer an approved vaccine for COVID-19 provided the Commissioners of Health and Education jointly certify that the administration of such immunization would be in the best interest of public health and legislation that would authorize the State Education Department to renew certain limited and provisional professional permits for an additional year.

The Legislature also passed laws that would: modify requirements related to the administration of eye drops by qualified individuals; authorize professionals licensed in another state to provide services at the Ironman Triathlon and the Ironman 70.3 in Lake Placid; update and create new continuing education requirements for land surveyors, professional engineers, and professional geologists and clarify the residency appeals process for individuals applying to CUNY community colleges.

As you can see, much has been accomplished this year, but much still remains to be done. Thank you for your leadership and steadfast support of our state's higher education community. I am proud of my thirteenth year as Chair of the Higher Education Committee and thank you for the opportunity to continue working with you and my colleagues toward our shared goal of ensuring that our systems of public and private higher education remain the best in the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Deborah J. Glick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "D".

Deborah J. Glick
Assemblymember

**2020 ANNUAL REPORT
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

Deborah J. Glick, Chair

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Kayli McTague, Committee Assistant
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Ginnie Farrell & Louise Mahon, Committee Clerks
Abigail Mellon, Program and Counsel Executive Secretary

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I. COMMITTEE JURISDICTION

The Committee on Higher Education is responsible for the initiation and review of legislation relevant to higher education and the professions in New York State. It is primarily concerned with policy initiatives affecting the State University of New York (SUNY), the City University of New York (CUNY), the independent colleges and universities of New York, proprietary vocational schools, student financial aid, and the licensed professions. However, because of the complex and comprehensive nature of New York's system of higher education, the Committee has also been involved in shaping legislation in such diverse public policy fields as health care, economic and workforce development, technology, capital financing, and elementary and secondary education.

The New York State system of higher education has been heralded for decades for its quality and comprehensive service to the public with a full range of academic, professional, and vocational programs. The three components of this system include the State University of New York (SUNY), the City University of New York (CUNY), and the numerous independent colleges and universities, proprietary colleges and schools located within New York State.

In addition to providing support to the state-operated campuses of SUNY and the senior college programs of CUNY, New York State contributes financially to community colleges and provides direct aid to independent colleges and universities. The state also demonstrates its commitment to higher education through funding one of the country's largest state-supported Tuition Assistance Programs (TAP), a need-based grant program that helps eligible New York State residents pay tuition at approved higher education schools in the state (both public and private institutions).

The Committee on Higher Education also monitors the ongoing activities of the 54 professions, which the State Education Department (SED) is charged with licensing and regulating. Through careful consideration of legislation affecting the professions and by monitoring the professional discipline functions of SED and the Department of Health, the Committee endeavors to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public and to ensure the maintenance of high standards and competence within the professional realm.

This report summarizes the activities and achievements of the Assembly Committee on Higher Education in each of its major areas of responsibility during the 2020 Legislative Session.

II. HIGHER EDUCATION

A. Budget Highlights

The 2020-21 Legislative budget for higher education provided \$86.8 million in additional funding above the Executive's proposal. This increase in funding includes a restoration of \$1.1 million and \$902,000 for SUNY and CUNY child care centers, respectively, and a restoration of \$2.5 million for the Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) at CUNY.

1. Community Colleges

This year, the Executive's proposal maintained State support for community colleges at prior-year levels of \$2,947 for each full-time equivalent (FTE) student. Base aid is the State's responsibility for its share of community college budgeted operating costs. The State, the sponsoring locality, and the students share in the operational costs of community colleges; therefore, the level of State support that community colleges receive directly affects tuition rates and local contributions. Statutorily the State is obligated to pay one-third of a community college's operating costs and up to forty percent of these costs for full opportunity schools. The enacted SFY 2020-21 Budget continues the same level of per pupil support for community colleges as last year.

The Legislature restored funding for the SUNY and CUNY child care centers, providing a total of \$1.1 million to SUNY and \$902,000 to CUNY child care centers. The Legislature also restored \$2.5 million in funding for ASAP at CUNY community colleges. ASAP provides qualified students at nine CUNY colleges with a range of academic, financial, and personal supports to help them earn associate degrees within three years.

2. SUNY State Operated Colleges and CUNY Senior Colleges

The Legislature maintained support for Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC), providing a total of \$56.5 million in funding. EOCs provide academic and vocational training to adults to help them obtain the skills and credentials they need to pursue higher education or to secure career-oriented employment.

The Legislature maintained funding for the Advanced Technology Training and Information Networking (ATTAIN) lab program, providing a total of \$5.5 million in funding within SUNY. ATTAIN labs are located across New York State's most economically challenged urban and rural communities and provide communities access to new technologies, education, and technology training.

The Legislature restored \$250,000 for the CUNY Pipeline at the Graduate Center, \$1.5 million to the School of Labor and Urban Studies, formerly known as the Joseph Murphy Institute, and \$100,000 for the Orange County Community College Bridge Program. The Legislature provided \$20,000 for CUNY Citizenship Now!, which provides individuals with free immigration law services on their path to U.S. citizenship.

The Legislature also restored \$700,000 for small business development centers; \$600,000 for graduate diversity fellowships; \$500,000 for telecounseling and mental health services at SUNY; \$250,000 for Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine; \$100,000 for the Benjamin Center at SUNY New Paltz; \$200,000 for the SUNY Institute for Leadership and Diversity and Inclusion; and \$150,000 for the New York Hispanic Leadership Institute.

The Legislature accepted the Executive's proposal to establish the Curing Alzheimer's Health Consortium within SUNY. The consortium will collaborate with SUNY research institutions and the Department of Health to identify opportunities to develop new therapeutic treatments and cures for Alzheimer's.

The Legislature accepted the Executive's proposal to allow SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF), Downstate Medical Center, Upstate Medical Center, and SUNY Polytechnic Institute to increase their non-resident tuition up to 10% for four years beginning in the 2020-21 academic year.

The enacted budget does not include the Executive's proposal that would extend SUNY and CUNY's authorization to annually increase undergraduate resident tuition up to \$200 through the 2024-25 academic year.

Finally, the Legislature extended, for two more years, the tuition waiver programs for NYC police officers, firefighters and fire officers attending CUNY. Under these tuition waiver programs, qualified students enrolled in programs leading to a baccalaureate or higher degree at a CUNY senior college can attend one course without tuition, provided that the course is related to their employment.

3. *SUNY Health Science Centers*

The Legislature accepted the Executive's proposal to increase SUNY Hospital spending authority by \$136.2 million.

4. *Independent Colleges and Universities*

Bundy Aid, formally known as Unrestricted Aid to Independent Colleges and Universities, provides direct support to higher education institutions based on the number and type of degrees conferred by the college or university. Funding for Bundy Aid was maintained at the prior year level of \$35.1 million.

5. *Financial Aid/Access Programs*

Grants

New York State is fortunate to have one of the most comprehensive systems of financial aid in the United States. At the forefront is the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), New York's largest grant program that helps eligible New York residents pay tuition at approved schools in the State. Award amounts are determined by net taxable income (up to \$80,000) and financial status

(independent or dependent). Depending on income, TAP awards can range from \$500 to \$5,165 with low-income students receiving larger awards. TAP helps keep college accessible and affordable for students who would otherwise not be able to attend. There were no changes to TAP in the 2020-21 State budget.

Additionally, students who attend a private, not for profit college or university in New York may be eligible for the Enhanced Tuition Award (ETA). The program offers eligible students \$6,000 through a combination of their TAP award, the Enhanced Tuition Award, and a matching award from the college or university. The enacted budget did not include the Executive's proposal to increase the income eligibility threshold for the program from \$125,000 to \$150,000.

Scholarships

In 2017, the Legislature established the Excelsior Scholarship, which has allowed qualified New York State residents to attend SUNY or CUNY tuition free. The enacted budget did not include the Executive's proposal to increase the income eligibility threshold for the Excelsior Scholarship from \$125,000 to \$150,000.

Access Programs

Access to higher education has been a long-standing concern of this Committee. Over the years, the Legislature has created programs that provide special assistance to educationally and economically disadvantaged students, underrepresented groups, and "at-risk" youth (students who require additional support in order to achieve academic success). The Assembly has been committed to ensuring that all students have access to higher education and ensuring their academic success through the support of access programs.

Through counseling, remedial coursework, financial assistance, drop-out prevention, and skills training, these programs are dedicated not only to encouraging enrollment in college, but also helping to ensure success in the postsecondary academic environment. New York's Access Programs include:

*The Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) provides critical access programs for educationally and economically disadvantaged students who attend independent institutions of higher education. HEOP programs serve approximately 4,900 students through 53 programs including pre-freshman summer programs, remedial and developmental courses, tutoring, and counseling. HEOP students, who do not meet the traditional academic criteria when they are admitted to college, typically earn their degrees at rates that equal or exceed other students. With mentoring and support, 66% of HEOP students graduate within five years of enrolling. There are over 36,000 HEOP alumni. The Legislature maintained support for HEOP, providing \$35.5 million in funding.

*The Education Opportunity Program (EOP) provides academic support and financial aid to students who attend public institutions of higher education and show promise for mastering college-level work, but who may otherwise not be admitted. EOP services are available at most SUNY schools, at all CUNY senior colleges through the Percy Ellis Sutton Search for Education,

Elevation, and Knowledge (SEEK) program, and at all CUNY community colleges through the College Discovery program. The Legislature provided \$32.2 million in funding for EOP; \$28.1 million for SEEK; and \$1.3 million for College Discovery.

*The Liberty Partnerships Program (LPP) serves approximately 11,500 middle, junior, and senior high school students who are at risk of dropping out. LPP also assists students in completing high school, preparing for and entering college, and obtaining meaningful employment. LPP has a retention rate of 99% and a graduation rate of 92%. The Legislature maintained funding for LPP at \$18.4 million.

*The Teacher Opportunity Corps (TOC) has the goal of attracting more African-Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans to the teaching profession and to prepare these individuals to work effectively with students who are at risk of academic failure and dropping out of school. TOC is also considered to be a model of excellence for teacher education programs. The Legislature accepted the Executive's proposal to maintain TOC funding at \$450,000.

*The Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP) and Collegiate-STEP (CSTEP) programs were created to encourage the attendance of more students of underrepresented and economically disadvantaged populations by helping these students enter collegiate study and careers in scientific, technical, and health-related fields. The Legislature maintained funding for STEP and CSTEP at \$15.8 million and \$11.9 million, respectively.

*The State provides small awards for Native Americans pursuing post-secondary study in New York. This access program offers financial aid to eligible Native Americans and has been critical in addressing the underrepresentation of this population in New York State's higher education system. The Legislature accepted the Executive's proposal to maintain funding for post-secondary aid to Native Americans at \$800,000.

*The Foster Youth College Success Initiative provides support services to assist youth in foster care to apply for, enroll in, and succeed in college by allowing SED to allocate additional funding to expand opportunities through current post-secondary opportunity programs for foster youth. The enacted budget provided a total of \$6 million in funding. The Legislature also provided technical amendments for the Foster Youth College Success Initiative.

6. *Capital Matching Grants Program*

The Legislature modified the Executive's proposal to create a strategic capital match grants program for SUNY and CUNY to clarify that funding will only be provided if the bonds could be issued without adversely affecting the availability of funding for health, safety, or essential government services.

B. Legislative Highlights

1. *Community Colleges*

New York State has 37 public community colleges: 30 within the SUNY system and 7 within the CUNY system. With an enrollment of approximately 284,674 students, community colleges provide a primary source of access to higher education opportunities. The community colleges of SUNY and CUNY are referred to as “full opportunity” institutions, accepting all recent high school graduates and returning residents from the colleges’ sponsorship areas.

Community colleges are unique in that they are financed cooperatively by three partners: the State, a local sponsor, and the students. Community colleges are primarily governed by the local sponsor, assuring that these institutions have greater flexibility to respond to the local educational needs of their unique student population. Many community college students are non-traditional students who return to college later in life, attend part-time and/or combine work and family responsibilities with study.

2. *City University of New York*

Founded as the Free Academy in 1847, the City University of New York (CUNY) has grown into the largest urban public university in the nation. CUNY comprises 25 campuses throughout Queens, Brooklyn, Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten Island. It includes 11 senior colleges, a two-year preparatory medical program, an honors college, a journalism school, a school of professional studies, a law school, a school of public health and health policy, a school of labor and urban studies, a graduate center, and 7 community colleges. Through this network, CUNY provides educational opportunities and skills training to an ethnically and culturally diverse population of approximately 271,242 students annually: 179,527 at the senior colleges and 91,715 at the community colleges.

3. *State University of New York*

The State University of New York (SUNY) is the largest comprehensive public university system in the nation, embracing 64 distinct individual campuses located in urban, suburban, and rural communities across New York State. These 64 campuses offer a full range of academic, professional, and vocational programs through their university centers, comprehensive colleges, colleges of technology, and community colleges. SUNY enrolls approximately 415,572 students in over 7,000 programs of study.

4. *Independent Colleges and Universities*

New York State is fortunate to have the most diversified and largest independent sector of higher education in the nation. The independent colleges and universities of the State enroll nearly 500,000 students. New York not only boasts one of the nation’s largest private universities, New York University, it also prides itself on numerous outstanding small colleges as well. Independent campuses throughout New York State have a collective annual economic impact of \$88.8 billion, employ 415,600 New Yorkers, and have a \$30.7 billion payroll.

Modifying Admission Requirements for Graduate-Level Teacher and Educational Leader Programs

A.9750 Glick, Veto Message #75. This bill would remove the requirement that applicants admitted into a graduate-level teacher and leader education program must achieve a 3.0 minimum cumulative GPA in the candidate's undergraduate program, and instead allows the college to set a minimum GPA standard.

Codifying Educational Opportunity Centers

A.9804 Hyndman, Chapter 319 of the Laws of 2020. This law codifies SUNY's Educational Opportunity Centers (EOCs). Under the law, EOCs will be managed and supervised by SUNY to provide programs and services to assist academically and economically disadvantaged students. The law requires SUNY to formulate a plan and guidelines for the organization, development, coordination and operation of the EOCs.

Clarifying the Process for CUNY County Residency Appeals

A.10793 Glick, Chapter 296 of the Laws of 2020. This bill would provide a process for an individual seeking to enroll in a CUNY community college to appeal a county residency determination to the Chancellor of CUNY. The Chancellor shall make a determination after a hearing, upon ten days' notice to the county's chief fiscal officer.

III. LICENSED PROFESSIONS

A. Highlights

New York State currently licenses 54 professions under Title VIII of the Education Law. Legislation to license a new profession or alter the practice of an existing profession falls under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Higher Education. SED, through its Office of the Professions, regulates the practice of licensed professions on an ongoing basis.

An essential component of the monitoring process is to ensure that existing standards and qualifications reflect current practices and needs, especially in light of shifting demographics and rapidly changing technologies. Each year, the Committee reviews numerous pieces of legislation that propose to change the scope of practice of currently licensed professions. Ensuring that any modification to current professional standards is thoroughly examined and appropriately executed provides a means by which the Committee fulfills its obligations to protect the well-being of the public.

The 2020-2021 enacted budget included chapter amendments to the provisions of law authorizing health care professionals to provide professional services at certain events sanctioned by the New York Road Runners in 2020 and 2021, including the New York City and Brooklyn Half Marathons. The law applies to health care professionals appointed by the New York Road

Runners who are licensed in another state, and in good standing in such state.

The enacted budget also included provisions extending several licensed profession authorizations, including:

- for an additional two years, the law that allows approved multidisciplinary evaluation programs to employ a certified school psychologist to conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation of a preschool child, infant, or toddler having or suspected of having a disability;
- for an additional five years, the law that allows physical therapy assistants to provide services in public and private primary and secondary schools;
- for an additional five years, the law that authorizes OPWDD, OCFS, and OMH to provide applied behavioral analysis services by unlicensed persons;
- for an additional two years, the law that allows pharmacists to perform collaborative drug therapy management with physicians in certain settings; and
- for an additional two years, the law that allows pharmacists to administer certain immunizations.

The 2020-21 enacted budget did not include the following Executive's proposals to:

- allow public accountancy firms to have minority ownership of up to 49 percent by individuals who are not licensed as certified public accountants or public accountants and require non-licensee owners to pay an annual \$300 fee to SED;
- amend the provisions of law related to pharmacy technicians; and
- expand the list of immunizations that pharmacists may administer.

Enhancing SED's Disciplinary Authority for Licensed Professionals

A.1184-A Glick, Passed Assembly. This bill would require licensed professionals to report any conviction of a crime, determination of professional misconduct, or adverse employment action to SED within thirty days and would establish a summary suspension process after a determination that the public health, safety or welfare imperatively requires emergency action against a professional license or registered entity.

Authorizing Optometrists to Prescribe Certain Medications

A.1193-C Paulin, Passed Assembly. This bill would authorize licensed optometrists to prescribe certain oral medications, including antibiotics, anti-glaucoma agents and antiviral agents. Qualified optometrists would be required to complete eighteen hours of continuing education related to systemic disease and therapeutic treatment per triennial registration period. Optometrists graduating prior to January 1, 2021 would also be required to complete an oral therapeutic pharmaceutical agent certification course and examination.

Authorizing Pharmacists to Partially Fill Prescriptions

A.9034 McDonald, Veto Message #74. This bill would allow a pharmacist to partially fill a prescription for a Schedule II, III, IV, or V controlled substance at the request of the prescriber or

the patient. The remaining quantity of the medication could be dispensed separately only once in conformity with its directed use.

Authorizing Professionals Appointed by the World Triathlon Corporation

A.9733-B Stec, Chapter 164 of the Laws of 2020. This law authorizes certain health care professionals who are licensed in another state or territory, who are in good standing in such state or territory, and who have been appointed by the World Triathlon Corporation, to provide services to participating athletes at the Ironman Triathlon and the Ironman 70.3 being held in Lake Placid, New York during 2020.

Continuing Education Requirements for Land Surveyors, Professional Engineers and Professional Geologists

A.10021-A Englebright, Chapter 260 of the Laws of 2020. This law updates the continuing education requirements for land surveyors and professional engineers, and creates such requirements for professional geologists. Under the law, professional geologists are required to complete a minimum of 36 hours of continuing education. The law also authorizes professionals to carry over up to six hours of continuing education to a subsequent registration period, removes restrictions on the format of educational activities, and defines the acceptable continuing education coursework for professional engineering, land surveying and geology.

Authorizing Pharmacists to Administer COVID-19 Immunizations

A.10508-A Paulin, Chapter 110 of the Laws of 2020. This law authorizes licensed pharmacists to administer a COVID-19 immunization no sooner than ninety days after approval by the Centers for Disease Control. Under the law, the Commissioner of Health and the Commissioner of Education must jointly certify that the administration of the COVID-19 immunization would be in the best interest of public health.

Modifying Requirements for Personnel to Instill Eye Drops

A.10634-B McDonald, Chapter 180 of the Laws of 2020. This law amends the requirements for personnel under the supervision of an ophthalmologist or optometrist to instill dilating eye drops in a patient's eyes. Under the new law, individuals must be at least eighteen years old and comply with standards issued by SED. Further, supervising ophthalmologists and optometrists are subject to the full disciplinary and regulatory authority of the Board of Regents and SED. Such supervisors shall also submit certain information to SED, notify patients of the service, and provide patients the opportunity to refuse such service.

Authorizing the Renewal of Limited and Provisional Permits

A.10741 Glick, Chapter 182 of the Laws of 2020. This law authorizes SED to renew certain limited and provisional permits for an additional twelve months for good cause shown, due to the state disaster emergency declared by the Governor pursuant to Executive Order 202.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education

July 28, 2020
Virtual

The Assembly Standing Committee on Higher Education and the Senate Standing Committee on Higher Education convened a joint hearing and received testimony examining the impact COVID-19 had on higher education institutions, students, faculty and staff during the Spring 2020 semester and will have on the upcoming 2020-21 academic year. Specifically, the Committees sought testimony from stakeholders across the State on the academic and financial impact COVID-19 has had and will continue to have on institutions of higher education as it relates to enrollment, affordability, and the transition to distance learning. Additionally, the Committees welcomed testimony on the reopening steps colleges and universities are taking to ensure the health and safety of students, faculty and staff for the 2020-21 academic year.

Individuals who testified at the hearing include: Robert Megna, Officer in Charge, SUNY; Tod Laursen, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor, SUNY; Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, Chancellor, CUNY; Matthew Sapienza, Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer, CUNY; José Luis Cruz, Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost, CUNY; Dr. Guillermo Linares, President, HESC; Elsa Magee, Executive Vice President, HESC; Mary Beth Labate, President, Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities; Timothy Hunter, Chair, CUNY University Student Senate (USS); Juvanie Piquant, Vice Chair of Legislative Affairs, CUNY USS; Alihaider Hassan, Vice Chair of Evening and Part Time, CUNY USS; Natalie Segev, Vice Chair of Senior Colleges, CUNY USS; Celis Hinds, Vice Chair of Community College, CUNY USS; Colin Smith, Delegate, CUNY USS; Brooke Smith, Delegate, CUNY USS; Jahad Hoyte, President, SUNY Student Assembly; Bradley Hershenson, Director of Legislative Affairs, SUNY Student Assembly; Gaelle Jean-Baptiste, Chair, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, SUNY Student Assembly; Shaheer Khan, Director of Federal Relations, SUNY Student Assembly; John Clancy, Office of Student Government Relations, Cornell Student Assembly; Mohammed Islam, Educational Opportunity Program, Cornell Student Assembly; Dakota Stennett-Neris, Cornell Student Assembly; Alithia Rodriguez-Rolon, Director of Legislation, NYSUT; Roberta Elins, President of United College Employees of FIT; Frederick E. Kowal, President, United University Professions (UUP); Barbara Bowen, President, Professional Staff Congress; Donna Stelling-Gurnett, President, Association of Proprietary Colleges; Ryan Carson, Downstate Supervisor, Higher Education Campaign Coordinator, New York Public Interest Research Group; Melanie Kravelis, Senior Manager of Policy, Young Invincibles; Zaret Cortorreal, Student and Young Advocate, Young Invincibles; Carolina Rodriguez, Director, Education Debt Consumer Assistance Program, Community Service Society of NY; and Darleny Suriel, Policy Assistant, Goddard Riverside.

Testimony showed the swift measures that colleges and universities took to adopt new COVID-related protocols and transition to distance learning. In the middle of the spring semester, schools across the state saw most of their students leave campus as faculty and administration

restructured courses and academic requirements. CUNY estimates that it converted almost 50,000 in-person courses to distance education.

As colleges and universities transitioned and adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic, witnesses described wide-ranging impacts, including challenges accessing remote learning technology, faculty and staff, and other academic supports. Witnesses reiterated the significance of federal funding. The higher education assistance made available through the federal CARES Act enabled schools to disperse money to students and cover costs associated with the pandemic. Stakeholders expounded on the need for additional federal stimulus and maintenance of State funding for financial aid programs.

The Impact of COVID-19 on State-Funded Student Financial Aid and Access Opportunity Programs

September 22, 2020
Virtual

The Assembly Standing Committee on Higher Education and Subcommittee on Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) convened a hearing and received testimony examining the impact of COVID-19 on state-funded student financial aid and access opportunity programs, including the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant financial challenges and uncertainties for the State that may lead to a loss or reduction in the financial aid that has been traditionally available for students and their families. This could have far reaching consequences for students, colleges, and universities and severely impact a student's ability to complete his or her education. The Committees sought testimony from stakeholders on the impact of COVID-19 on state-funded student financial aid and access opportunity programs, including TAP. The Committees also accepted testimony on steps needed to mitigate the impacts of any potential student aid reductions.

Individuals who testified at the hearing include: Elsa Magee, Executive Vice President, HESC; Interim Commissioner Betty A. Rosa, SED; John D'Agati, Senior Deputy Commissioner for Education Policy, SED; William Murphy, Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education, SED; Phyllis Morris, Chief Financial Officer, SED; Robert Megna, Senior Vice Chancellor and Operating Officer, SUNY; Fred Kowal, President, United University Professions; Matthew Sapienza, Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer, CUNY; Sunday Coward, University Dean for Special Programs, CUNY; Jahad Hoyte, President, SUNY Student Assembly; Bradley Hershenson, Vice President, SUNY Student Assembly; Kevin Rogers, Director of State Relations; SUNY Student Assembly; Shaheer Khan, Director of Federal Affairs, SUNY Student Assembly; Kelvin Cooke, Chair, Community Colleges, SUNY Student Assembly; Juvanie Piquant, Vice Chair of Legislative Affairs, CUNY University Student Senate; Mary Beth Labate, President, Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities; Jessica Velesaca, Junior, HEOP Ambassador, Cornell University; Michael Paulino, Senior and HEOP Student, St. Lawrence University; Jasmine Hooper, Director, Foster Youth Success Alliance; Darleny Suriel, Student & Policy Assistant, Goddard Riverside; Donna Stelling-Gurnett, President, Association of

Proprietary Colleges (APC); David Cohen, President, Five Towns College; Christopher Barto, Vice President of Government Relations and Community Affairs, LIM College; Marissa Guijarro, President, New York State Association for College Admission Counseling (NYSACAC); and Howard Leslie, President, New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association (NYSFAAA).

Testimony from the hearing stressed the importance of maintaining current and future funding commitments to the State's financial aid and access programs. HESC's financial aid programs annually serve 330,000 college-going students and college graduates, while the opportunity programs administered by SED annually serve nearly 42,000 of the State's most at-risk students. SED predicted that permanent aid reductions for opportunity programs could result in thousands of fewer students being served and the loss of hundreds of staff positions.

Additional testimony revealed the academic toll of financial uncertainty brought on by the pandemic. Students from SUNY and CUNY detailed the gaps in student services exacerbated by the pandemic at their institutions. Students requested additional academic support due to the transition to online learning and staffing cuts, and more funding and marketing related to mental health resources on campuses.

V. OUTLOOK FOR 2021

As the Committee looks ahead to the upcoming 2021 Legislative Session, many of the traditional goals relative to higher education and the professions will continue to take precedence.

Foremost among the Committee's priorities for the 2021 session will be to secure financing for the coming fiscal year that is sufficient to meet the needs of SUNY, CUNY and the independent sector in order to support their unique educational missions. Due to the financial challenges brought on by the coronavirus pandemic, the goal of preserving access to higher education for students across New York State has never been so critical. By continuing to fight for funding for access programs, the Committee will promote the recognition of these highly successful educational services and assist more students in realizing their higher education aspirations. As always, the Committee will continue to focus on financial aid, including TAP, and ensure the availability of such assistance at current or enhanced levels. The Assembly Higher Education Committee is proud of this comprehensive financial aid program and will fight to continue its success in opening doors to college students throughout the state.

In 2021, the Committee will also address several important legislative issues. Among these will be measures relating to the licensed professions overseen by SED's Office of the Professions. Chief among these will be initiatives aimed at preserving the integrity of the individual professions and ensuring that professional competence translates into increased public protection and safety. The Committee will continue to study the evolution of existing professions to assess the possible need for statutory changes to reflect the changing needs of consumers.

APPENDIX A

PROFESSIONS LICENSED, CERTIFIED OR AUTHORIZED BY THE BOARD OF REGENTS

Acupuncture	Mental Health Practitioners
Applied Behavior Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creative Arts Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Licensed Behavior Analysts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Marriage and Family Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Certified Behavior Analyst Assistants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mental Health Counselor
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Psychoanalyst
Athletic Training	Midwifery
Audiology	Nursing
Certified Shorthand Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Registered Professional Nurse
Chiropractic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nurse Practitioner
Clinical Laboratory Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clinical Nurse Specialist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clinical Laboratory Technologist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Licensed Practical Nurse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cytotechnologist 	Occupational Therapy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clinical Laboratory Technician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Occupational Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Certified Histological Technician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Occupational Therapy Assistant
Dentistry	Ophthalmic Dispensing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dentist 	Optometry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dental Anesthesia/Sedation 	Perfusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dental Hygienist 	Pharmacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Certified Dental Assistant 	Physical Therapy
Dietetics and Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical Therapist
Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical Therapist Assistant
Geology	Podiatry
Interior Design	Polysomnographic Technician
Land Surveying	Psychology
Landscape Architecture	Public Accountancy
Massage Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Certified Public Accountant
Medical Physics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public Accountant
Medicine	Respiratory Therapy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respiratory Therapist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physician Assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respiratory Therapy Technician

• Specialist's Assistant	Veterinary Medicine
Social Work	• Veterinarian
• Licensed Master Social Worker	• Veterinary Technician
• Licensed Clinical Social Worker	
Speech-Language Pathology	

APPENDIX B

2020 SUMMARY SHEET

Summary of Action on All Bills Referred to the Committee on Higher Education

	<u>Assembly Bills</u>	<u>Senate Bills</u>	<u>Total Bills</u>
<u>Bills Reported Favorable To:</u>			
Codes	2	0	2
Judiciary	0	0	0
Ways and Means	7	0	7
Rules	4	0	4
Floor	1	0	1
<u>TOTAL:</u>	14	0	14
<u>Committee Action</u>			
Held for Consideration	29	0	29
Defeated	0	0	0
Enacting Clause Stricken	10	0	10
<u>Remaining in Committee</u>	365	16	381
<u>Bills Reference Changed:</u>			
Codes	1		
Ways and Means	1		
Total Number of Committee Meetings Held	4		