

## **SUNY University Faculty Senate Executive Committee Statement on the Executive Budget 22 February 2022**

### Executive Summary

The Executive Committee of the State University of New York University Faculty Senate (SUNY UFS) thanks Governor Hochul for recognizing the value of SUNY and CUNY in her State of the State Address and proposing the best Executive Budget for public higher education in New York State since before the Great Recession. More is needed, though, to make up for the \$4.2B in inflation-adjusted operating budget state support that SUNY has lost since FY2009. New York State enjoys the best revenue projections in a generation or more and has more capacity than ever to make significant progress in increasing the share of public funds going to SUNY and CUNY core operating budgets and decreasing the share of SUNY and CUNY core operating costs paid for by net student tuition and fees. Doing so would make SUNY and CUNY even more attractive and affordable for prospective students.

The SUNY UFS Executive Committee calls on the Governor and Legislature to enhance the Governor's commitment to public higher education and advance SUNY farther and faster in the Enacted Budget through the following steps:

- Commit at least \$100M in additional new direct state operating aid to better support *all* SUNY state-operated campuses for FY2023.
- Fully fund in FY2023 the updates to Assembly Bill A5473B, which operationalize the commitment to a robust maintenance of effort for SUNY and CUNY that we called for in our Executive Budget Resolution, by funding debt service, fringe benefits, and mandatory operating cost increases for *all* SUNY and CUNY institutions.
- Restore at least \$87M in essential mission funding to SUNY's public teaching hospitals for FY2023, thereby recognizing their crucial contributions to the capacity and resilience of New York State's medical and public health infrastructure and investing in their contributions to the Governor's goal of growing the healthcare workforce by 20% in the next five years.
- Ensure the eligibility of all SUNY frontline patient-facing and student-facing workers for essential worker bonuses, with parity to their non-SUNY counterparts.
- Include SUNY health professions, health science centers, and hospitals in the Governor's proposed \$10B healthcare workforce investment.

SUNY and CUNY transform students' lives and life chances and are foundations for democracy, platforms for civic engagement, engines of economic development, pathways to the middle class, magnets for population growth and private investment, and generators of health, creativity, and innovation. We thank the Governor and Legislature for considering these requests in order to help us advance this mission.

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University Faculty Senate (UFS) is the system-wide shared governance organization for the state-operated and statutory campuses of SUNY. SUNY UFS is committed to supporting faculty and staff senates on our 34 campuses, and advising on effective educational policies and other professional matters throughout the University. <https://sunyufs.us>

The 64 campuses of the State University of New York (SUNY) transform students' lives and life chances and serve New York state as foundations for democracy, platforms for civic engagement, engines of economic development, pathways to the middle class, magnets for population growth and private investment, and generators of health, creativity, and innovation. <https://www.suny.edu>

## Full Statement

The Executive Committee of the State University of New York University Faculty Senate (SUNY UFS) thanks Governor Hochul for speaking eloquently in her State of the State Address about the power of education to change lives and transform families, “across generations”; for characterizing SUNY and CUNY as “engines of social mobility” with “untapped potential”; and for “outlining a vision to make SUNY the *best* statewide public higher education system in the nation.”

SUNY UFS supports Governor Hochul’s goals from her State of the State Book to “recruit and retain top faculty and staff” at SUNY, “significantly diversify the SUNY workforce,” and increase “the number of full-time faculty of color” at SUNY through “competitive salaries and benefits and significant investments in professional development, technology, infrastructure, fellowships, and learning labs,” as well as improve “faculty compensation and faculty diversity” at university centers. The UFS agrees with Governor Hochul that it will take a diverse and equitably supported faculty and staff to plan and implement her proposals to support apprenticeships in high-growth industries, targeting underrepresented groups such as women and people of color; create an Empire State Teacher Residency Program that “will prioritize diversity among teacher residents and partnering mentors”; fund new cohorts of the Master Teacher Program; “connect SUNY and CUNY student volunteers with local nonprofit partners to fill critical community needs identified by local stakeholders”; increase the number of paid internships available to SUNY students; and help five additional SUNY campuses become federally designated as Minority-Serving Institutions.

The SUNY UFS Executive Committee is encouraged by evidence in the Executive Budget Briefing Book that Governor Hochul has considered UFS’s recommendations and rationales supporting the call in our Executive Budget Resolution for New York State to become a national leader in “sustainably and equitably supporting and advancing SUNY and CUNY’s core academic missions” and in “investing direct state aid in SUNY and CUNY’s core operating budgets.” The Executive Committee finds much to applaud in the Executive Budget, including proposals to increase operating funds for SUNY and CUNY, increase support for educational opportunity programs and centers, expand eligibility for the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), increase investments in and access to SUNY child care centers, and immediately and permanently eliminate the TAP Gap and the Excelsior Gap. We enthusiastically support these aspects of Governor Hochul’s vision and goals for SUNY; together, they represent a long-awaited departure from over two decades of nearly uninterrupted balancing of New York State budgets in part through inflation-adjusted cuts to SUNY’s campuses, public teaching hospitals, and students’ learning conditions.

Governor Hochul’s Executive Budget proposal thus represents a significant step in the right direction for SUNY. However, given the scale of the substantial declines in direct state aid for the SUNY core operating budget since the Great Recession—from the peak of FY2009, thirteen years of combined reductions total over \$4.2B, in 2020 dollars—we fear that the proposed Executive Budget does not support campuses facing fiscal challenges escalated by the pandemic or advance SUNY far or fast enough. Adjusted for inflation, state support for SUNY core operations in FY2021 was about 61% of the level from FY2009—a reduction of 38.6% (see Table 1, below). As a result, SUNY’s campuses have been making repeated and often substantial cuts

even while burning through reserve funds. Tuition increases have shifted costs onto students and their families, yet have covered only a small portion of the reductions. While all campuses have been harmed, the impact on SUNY's comprehensive colleges and colleges of agriculture/technology has been particularly acute. In the past two years alone, the COVID-19 pandemic imposed new risks, costs, stresses, and responsibilities on their students, staff, faculty, and leaders, with especially heavy burdens on their frontline patient-facing and student-facing workers. Even the significant federal pandemic relief funds that have been made available to SUNY and CUNY campuses provide only short-term offsets to severe drops in recurring state support.

As of this writing, New York State enjoys the best revenue projections in a generation or more. The state has more capacity than ever to make much more progress in increasing the share of public funds going to SUNY and CUNY core operating budgets, decreasing the share of SUNY and CUNY core operating costs paid for by net student tuition and fees, and thereby making SUNY and CUNY even more attractive and affordable for prospective students.

Hence, we call on the Governor and the Legislature to incorporate into the final Enacted Budget the following priorities:

- Commit at least \$100M in additional new direct state operating aid to better support *all* SUNY state-operated campuses for FY2023.
- Fully fund in FY2023 the updates to Assembly Bill A5473B, which operationalize the commitment to a robust maintenance of effort for SUNY and CUNY that we called for in our Executive Budget Resolution by funding debt service, fringe benefits, and mandatory operating cost increases for *all* SUNY and CUNY institutions.
- Restore at least \$87M in essential mission funding to SUNY's public teaching hospitals for FY2023, thereby recognizing their crucial contributions to the capacity and resilience of New York State's medical and public health infrastructure and investing in their contributions to the Governor's goal of growing the healthcare workforce by 20% in the next five years.
- Ensure the eligibility of all SUNY frontline patient-facing and student-facing workers for essential worker bonuses, with parity to their non-SUNY counterparts.
- Include SUNY health professions, health science centers, and hospitals in the \$10B healthcare workforce investment.

The increase in additional new direct state operating aid to SUNY's state-operated campuses, combined with the commitment to a robust maintenance of effort, would help New York State address two resolutions from the UFS's Winter 2022 Plenary, which request that the FY2023 budget:

- Includes funds specifically allocated to recruit, retain, and mentor faculty of color in SUNY that are sufficient to significantly and rapidly close the gap between the proportion of SUNY students of color relative to the entire SUNY student body and the proportion of SUNY faculty of color relative to the overall SUNY faculty.
- Creates a pool of funding and appropriate resources for hiring full-time and/or tenure-track faculty with expertise in teaching courses that fulfill the learning outcomes of the

new SUNY General Education Framework category of Diversity: Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice on campuses that currently have little teaching expertise in this area.

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**Table 1. State-Operated Campus Direct State Tax Support and Reduction in Direct State Tax Support from the 2008-09 Peak.**

The following table is drawn from a presentation by the SUNY Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance and Business. This table calculates the cumulative loss of state core operating support since 2008-09. The second column presents the nominal dollars; the third column presents the same figures adjusted for inflation, in 2020 dollars. A one-time adjustment of about \$200M was included in FY 2008-09 to cover contractual obligations; subtracting this amount from the 2008-09 allocation establishes the baseline peak of state support in the third column. The fourth column calculates the difference from that peak, and the final column calculates the reduction as a percentage of the peak year's allocation. Whereas the combined reduction averages about 28% over the 13-year period, the reduction in core state operating support in the most recent year is a **38.57%** reduction from the peak.

**Table 1. State-Operated Campus Direct State Tax Support and Reduction in Direct State Tax Support from the 2008-09 Peak.**

Adjusted for 2020 Dollars / Does Not Reflect One-Time Deficit Reduction Plan (DRP) Actions in 2020/21 (\$K)

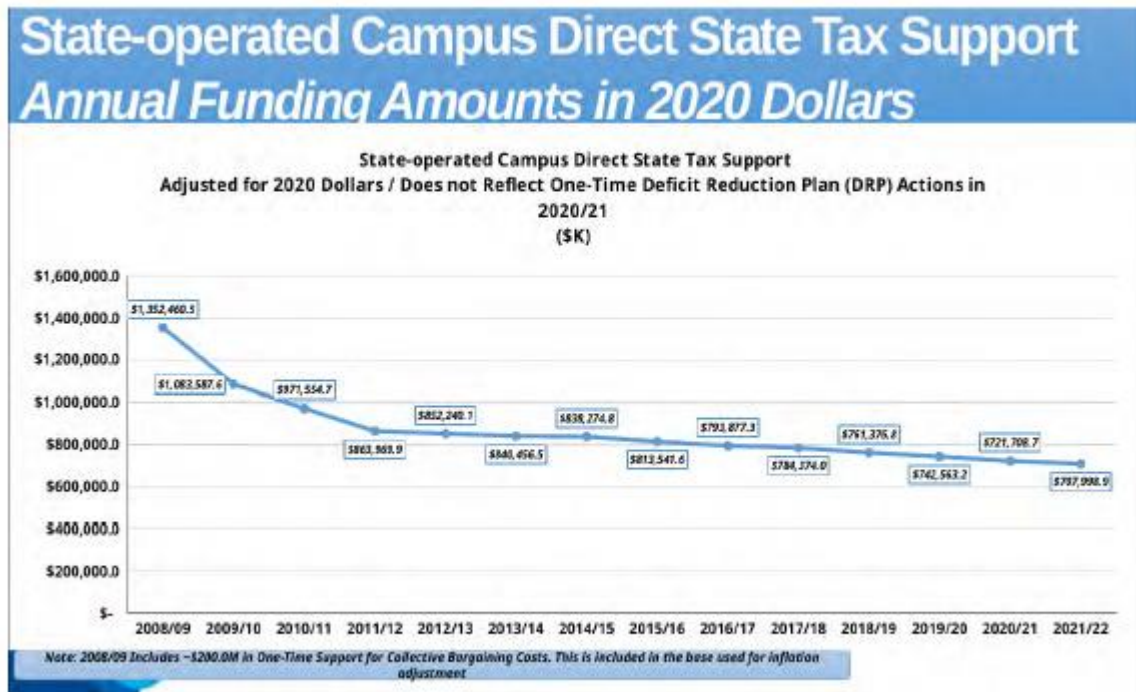
Year	Allocation in Nominal Dollars	Allocation in 2020 dollars	Difference from Peak	Percentage Reduction to Peak's Real Allocation
2008-09	\$1,034,000.0	\$1,352,460.5		
\$200M Adjustment for One-Time Support		\$1,152,460.5		
2009-10	\$861,062.6	\$1,083,587.6	\$68,872.9	5.98%
2010-11	\$785,982.2	\$971,554.7	\$180,905.8	15.70%
2011-12	\$704,044.9	\$863,969.9	\$288,490.6	25.03%
2012-13	\$707,998.8	\$852,240.1	\$300,220.4	26.05%
2013-14	\$404,998.9	\$840,456.5	\$312,004.0	27.07%
2014-15	\$715,618.9	\$838,274.8	\$314,185.7	27.26%
2015-16	\$712,687.4	\$813,541.6	\$338,918.9	29.41%
2016-17	\$707,998.9	\$793,877.3	\$358,583.2	31.11%
2017-18	\$707,998.9	\$784,374.0	\$368,086.5	31.94%
2018-19	\$707,998.9	\$761,376.8	\$391,083.7	33.93%
2019-20	\$707,998.9	\$742,563.2	\$409,897.3	35.57%
2020-21	\$707,998.9	\$721,708.7	\$430,751.8	37.38%
2021-22	\$707,998.9	\$707,998.9	\$444,461.6	38.57%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,140,387.1</b>	<b>\$10,775,524.1</b>	<b>\$4,206,462.4</b>	<b>28.08%</b>

*Note: 2008/09 Includes ~\$200.0M in One-Time Support for Collective Bargaining Costs. This is included in the base used for inflation adjustment.*

*\*\$200M is removed from the 2008-09 entry in the third column to make the reduction calculations.*

**Figure 1. State-Operated Campus Direct State Tax Support (Annual Funding Amounts in 2020 Dollars)**

The following figure is drawn from a presentation by the SUNY Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance and Business. This figure represents the same data as in Table 1 in graphical form, but does not include accumulated totals or percentage decreases.



**Table 2. NYS’s Rank among States on State Support (mostly tax revenues and lottery profits) in Constant Adjusted Dollars for Operating Expenses of Public Higher Education per \$1,000 Personal Income, per Capita, per Student FTE, as Share of Total State Revenues, and as Student Share (net tuition revenue as a percentage of total state revenue), 1980, 2001, 2008-2020**

We note that the Executive Budget Book accentuates the positive—New York State’s relatively high ranking in direct state aid to public higher education operating expenses per full-time equivalent student (student FTE) and fairly decent rank in student share (net tuition revenue as a percentage of total state revenue)—rather than its middle-of-the-pack status in direct state aid to public higher education operating expenses per capita and per \$1,000 of personal income, or its extremely low ranking as a share of total state revenues. Therefore, we reproduce the following table from our Executive Budget Resolution so that the Governor and Legislature may consider what SUNY and CUNY targets for the FY2023 budget would significantly move the needle on metrics focused on state effort relative to state capacity. We can and should do better.

New York is a large, wealthy state. We believe there should be more equity between public and private higher education in New York State.



<b>FY</b>	<b>/\$1K (rank)</b>	<b>/capita (rank)</b>	<b>/FTE (rank)</b>	<b>State allocation (rank)</b>	<b>Student share (rank)</b>
1980	7.7 (34)	313 (25)	11,504 (9)	5.7% (44)	20% (16)
2001	5.2 (44)	297 (38)	11,307 (20)	3.8% (48)	30% (23)
2008	5.9 (36)	352 (27)	11,589 (15)	3.9% (45)	30% (13)
2009	6.4 (36)	367 (21)	11,646 (8)	4.2% (46)	30% (12)
2010	6.1 (34)	358 (25)	10,956 (9)	4.2% (45)	33% (15)
2011	5.9 (30)	359 (19)	10,802 (7)	4.0% (44)	33% (12)
2012	5.3 (29)	329 (20)	9,873 (8)	3.6% (44)	36% (9)
2013	5.5 (29)	337 (16)	10,293 (8)	3.6% (44)	36% (9)
2014	5.4 (29)	341 (16)	10,525 (7)	3.6% (44)	36% (9)
2015	5.4 (30)	349 (15)	10,832 (7)	3.6% (44)	36% (10)
2016	5.3 (31)	349 (14)	10,984 (6)	3.5% (45)	37% (10)
2017	5.2 (34)	355 (14)	11,121 (7)	3.7% (44)	36% (11)
2018	5.2 (28)	363 (12)	11,351 (6)	3.5% (44)	34% (9)
2019	5.1 (30)	366 (13)	11,585 (6)		34% (10)
2020			11,657 (8)		34% (12)

Source: State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO)

For more context, compare New York's investments in public higher education to those of California, Texas, Michigan, and Massachusetts, as well as the U.S. average.

We close by observing that scoring the Executive Budget, One-House Budget, and Enacted Budget on the following metrics would allow for historical comparisons:

- SUNY's share of NYS general fund
- NYS general fund share of SUNY's core operating budget
- Expected ratio of student share (net tuition) to state share (direct state aid) that covers SUNY's core operating budget
- Appropriations of NYS general funds for SUNY operating expenses
  - per student FTE
  - per capita
  - per \$1K personal income

## Sources

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