



The Commission on
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Colleges & Universities
in New York

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Testimony

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The Value of Independent Higher Education in New York State
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Joint Legislative Public Hearing
New York State Senate Committees on Finance and Higher Education
New York State Assembly Committees on Ways & Means and Higher Education

Hamilton Hearing Room B, 2nd Floor
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Introduction

Good afternoon, and thank you Chairpersons Young, Farrell, LaValle and Glick and members of the Finance and Ways and Means Committees. I am Laura Anglin, President of the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities, representing more than 100 private, not-for-profit colleges and universities located here in New York State. I appreciate this opportunity to share the perspective of New York's Independent Sector of higher education with respect to the proposed 2016-17 Executive Budget.

The Independent Sector is changing the lives of thousands of New York's students and communities. First and foremost, the Independent Sector educates students, offering remarkably diverse learning environments. With a wide variety of campus settings, sizes, types and missions, students are able to choose a campus that best suits them and in doing so, increase their future success. The Independent Sector leads degree completions in the state, playing a vital role in educating our next generation of leaders, thinkers, educators, and innovators who will drive economic growth and enrich our communities.

More than 600 students were here in Albany last week for the New York Student Aid Alliance Advocacy Day. This annual event brings together students from across New York State, and all sectors of higher education, to stand up for student aid, including the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), the Arthur O. Eve Higher

Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (C-STEP), Science Technology Entry Program (STEP) and Liberty Partnerships Program (LPP). Students from every corner of the state made their way here to personally advocate for these programs and showcase the importance of these programs to higher education goals.

Students are at the core of New York's Independent Sector of higher education. Investment in New York's students is truly a down payment on New York's future. There are few opportunities to publicly express our appreciation, so thank you for supporting students and protecting their opportunity to choose from the more than 270 colleges and universities in New York State.

The Independent Sector of Higher Education

New York's private, not-for-profit colleges and universities provide more than 480,000 students with a variety of higher education options and environments. New York's Independent Sector (the largest in the country) grants more than one-half of the bachelor's degrees, as well as the majority of master's, doctoral, and first professional degrees earned in the state.

The sector enrolled 37 percent of New York's Black and 38 percent of Hispanic undergraduate college students and between 2010 and 2014; the number of Hispanic students attending four-year/graduate institutions in New York State's Independent Sector increased by 22 percent in that time. Further, more than half of Independent Sector undergraduates who receive TAP support (52 percent) come from families with incomes less than \$20,000 and nearly three-quarters (73 percent) have family incomes below \$40,000 annually.

Investing In and Serving Students: Independent Sector Innovation and Success

Thank you for your commitment to fully funding student aid programs that help New Yorkers meet their college expenses. We are grateful for your support of TAP, Direct Institutional "Bundy" Aid, HEOP, C-STEP and its high school counterpart STEP, LPP, and targeted programs for nursing and teaching.

By 2022, six in ten of the fastest growing occupations (63 percent) will require some form of postsecondary education. Projected degree requirements indicate an increased need for advanced degrees. Students and institutions will have to adjust for a new economy, which will be driven by the need for advanced degrees. In the next six years, jobs requiring a master's degree will grow by more than 18 percent, and by 16 percent for doctoral or professional degrees.

According to recent U.S. Census data for New York State, for populations aged 25 and over, nine percent of New Yorkers have earned an associate's degree, 19 percent have earned a bachelor's, and 15 percent have earned graduate or professional degrees. These numbers represent the highest degree level attained. New York State needs to continue to make educational attainment a priority, while continuing to assist families as the economy slowly recovers from the most recent recession. That is where

the Independent Sector comes into play, offering quality, access, diversity and choice to each New Yorker who wants to pursue their college dreams.

Now more than ever, it is essential to equip a new generation of students with the knowledge and skills necessary to not only enrich their own future and cultivate New York's economy, but to develop a set of innovative individuals who can compete globally. This begins with increasing the accessibility and flexibility of the state's higher education programs.

As the "traditional" college student is redefined, private, not-for-profit college and universities are adapting to provide greater opportunities that meet the personal realities for all those seeking higher education. Adult learners, veterans, and part-time students represent the new populations of students seeking out higher education. Programs such as TAP, HEOP, C-STEP, STEP and LPP all have proven to effectively serve the changing student population and pave the way to achieve success.

Tuition Assistance Program

To ensure that student aid can continue to serve its purpose, the TAP maximum award, last increased in 2014 by \$165, should be increased to \$6,500. As the crown jewel of New York State's vast array of student aid programs, more than five million New Yorkers have used TAP to meet their college expenses since its creation more than 45 years ago.

Prior-Prior

In addition to increasing the maximum award for TAP, we also want to ensure that applying for TAP remains easy for students and their families. On September 13, 2015, President Obama took executive action to allow the use of prior-prior year tax information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). As an example, a high school senior planning to enroll in college in Fall 2016 would be able to file the FAFSA using taxes from 2014.

Using two-years prior tax information on the FAFSA (as opposed to one-year prior information) will increase the form's accuracy and give families an earlier and better idea of their anticipated financial aid and college costs. However, for the purposes of applying for TAP, statute dictates the use of one-year prior tax information. New York State should follow the example of the federal government and allow New York families applying to TAP to use prior-prior year tax information. The positive benefits to students and their families if this change were implemented by the state cannot be overstated.

Reimagine Graduate Tuition Assistance

Undergraduate students are not the only population in need of state aid to help attain advanced education. As stated above, by 2022, six of the ten fastest growing major occupational groups will require some form of post-secondary education. With job growth and the labor market forecast indicating that advanced degrees will lead to

the greatest opportunities for workers, we view reimagining graduate tuition assistance—which was eliminated in 2010-11 and thereafter—as an important conversation. Let us help young professionals or adults looking to change career paths to prepare for occupations such as accounting, teaching, physical therapy, etc., by offering some form of graduate tuition assistance.

Opportunity Programs

The Independent Sector is deeply grateful for the state’s investment in student opportunity programs including HEOP, STEP, C-STEP, and LPP. We are especially thankful for the 15 percent funding increase for each program in last year’s adopted budget. That investment is a step forward in growing these programs to serve more New York resident students. Opportunity programs have a proven, measurable effect on the number of economically and educationally disadvantaged, as well as first-generation, students who attend and complete college. We are excited that the proposed Executive Budget builds last year’s legislative increase into the base. Still, the demand for these programs cannot be met within existing resources. Through sustained increases in base funding in order to both grow the program and provide for institutional flexibility to ensure that the program is adequately meeting student’s needs, we seek to double funding for these critical programs by 2020.

Uniform Financial Aid Information Sheet

In last year’s budget, the State enacted into law a uniform financial aid award letter that was to be adopted by every institution of higher education in the state to be developed by the Superintendent of the Department of Financial Services (DFS), in consultation with the Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC). We have worked closely with both HESC and DFS on development and implementation of this document. As implementation continues over next few months, we will continue to work with our colleges and universities and our state partners to ensure that the original legislative intent is met—ease of understanding in the financial aid award process for New York resident students and their families.

Build the Education Pipeline

New York State is a leading higher education destination for people from this nation and across the globe. Our campuses focus great attention on Pre K-12 outreach, closing the educational attainment gap and expanding access to a wide variety of advanced studies and careers—especially in critical degree areas. The Independent Sector strives to create a trajectory of success and functions as a talent magnet by encouraging a highly capable set of students to stay in New York after graduation.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Incentive Program

The future of New York State’s growth and prosperity and its position in the global marketplace rests in its students. The state is projected to have nearly a half-million STEM jobs by 2018, the third highest in the country. The Independent Sector can help meet that need, as we are leaders in degree conferrals in critical high needs

areas such as science, technology, engineering, and math. Our sector produces 56 percent of the bachelor's degrees and 72 percent of graduate degrees in STEM fields.

To prevent the outsourcing of these jobs, New York should tap into the built-in strength of all sectors of higher education by expanding the STEM Incentive Program so talented students can take their scholarship dollars to any college or university in New York State. The Executive Budget proposes a third year of increased funding for the STEM Incentive Program, which remains targeted toward State University of New York (SUNY) and City University of New York (CUNY) schools. We believe that the Independent Sector could be included in this program without additional cost to the state.

Masters-in-Education Teacher Incentive Scholarship Program

New York State has always set the precedent in education with its highly competent teacher workforce. To continue this tradition of excellence, it is crucial to expand the Masters-In-Education Teacher Incentive Scholarship Program. As private, not-for-profit colleges and universities confer 67 percent of the master's education degrees in the state, we ask that this program be expanded to apply to students in our sector. The State has long has a wise public policy objective—state scholarship dollars follow students to the college or university of their choice. This objective has always been a hallmark of the Independent Sector which has remained dedicated to ensuring students have the opportunity to attend the institution of their choice, one where they have the best chance of being successful.

Furthermore, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of kindergarten and elementary school teachers is expected to grow by 6 percent by 2024. This growth is expected because of projected increases in student enrollment. Measures must be taken to adjust to this impending demand and our partnership provides a logical solution. If the goal is to educate and retain the highest caliber of teachers, then let us work together.

Graduate-level Teacher Education and School Leadership Programs

With respect to educating a highly competent teacher workforce, last year's Enacted State Budget created new admissions requirements for teacher education. Specifically, these new requirements require institutions with graduate-level teacher education and school leadership programs to adopt rigorous admissions requirements that include a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher in the candidate's undergraduate program and a minimum score on the GRE, to be set by the institution, or the substantial equivalent of the same.

The Independent Sector has worked diligently with its schools of education on these new requirements, soliciting feedback from faculty and admission experts and seeking guidance from the State Education Department (SED) as the requirements of this law begin to take effect, including submitting a formal comment letter to SED on the regulations on November 23, 2015. The sector urges that the threshold set in statute that "[e]ach program may exempt no more than 15 percent of any incoming class of students" be expanded. In cases of small but effective programs, 15 percent

may be one or two students. Additionally, the threshold may thwart programs designed to prepare individuals who are changing careers (such as veterans) to become educators, or for programs devoted to preparing future educators from underrepresented populations. Finally, for adults who decide to become educators later in their life, grade point averages earned many years earlier may not be appropriate markers for the qualities associated with the promise of success in the classroom.

We continue to work with SED and the Governor's office to ensure that these new requirements will not hamper efforts for schools of education across the state from producing a diverse and competent teacher workforce.

Grow New York's Economy: Public-Private Partnerships

Higher education remains one of New York State's most significant economic sectors. Independent colleges and universities are integral to state and local economies, with an economic impact totaling more than \$74 billion annually. As a major employer, the Independent Sector generated 394,386 jobs throughout New York State in 2014, and our employees contributed an estimated \$1.9 billion in taxes. Beyond the numbers, the Independent Sector is a driving market force in the creation, acquisition, and distribution of knowledge.

Higher Education Capital (HECap) Matching Grants Program

The state has always found a willing and able partner in New York State's private, not-for-profit colleges and universities. One aspect of this long partnership in economic development efforts has been the HECap Program. Since its enactment, private, not-for-profit colleges and universities have leveraged this state investment to build, renovate and renew facilities and infrastructure that provides benefit for the students, faculty and staff and importantly—their communities. CFCU advocates for regular annual allocations of funding for this program to enable the Independent Sector to function as a powerful anchor tenant: driving economic impact and creating jobs in communities across the state.

Fund the Faculty Development Program and Technology Transfer Incentive Program

The Faculty Development and the Technology Transfer Incentive Programs were developed as powerful economic development engines. The state recognized that having leading entrepreneurial research faculty in science and technology would lead to the development and commercialization of cutting-edge technology, in turn leveraging college and university research partnerships as engines for economic development. Expanding both of these programs should be a priority in the state budget. As an international leader in faculty research and in the number of patents filed by institutions of higher education, state support is critical to maintain that edge. Both programs last received funding in 2014-15 state budget. These should be a priority this year in order to attract and retain talented faculty to New York and more cutting-edge research and technology from the classroom to the market.

Leverage College and University Research Partnerships

Beyond the Faculty Development and the Technology Transfer Incentive Programs, we support another round of Regional Economic Development Council funding, as well as funding for high technology programs including the Centers for Advanced Technology (CATs), Centers of Excellence, the Innovation Hot Spots and Incubators program and the Stem Cell Innovation Fund. Growing strategic partnerships in a coordinated effort and devoting more resources to them will ensure New York State's place as one of the leading destinations for faculty, researchers and students leading to the fostering of new ideas, the creation of new cutting edge knowledge, greater business development and improved lives for all New Yorkers.

Enact the Community Solutions Matching Grant Program

Colleges and universities have long been good community partners. Through the Community Solutions Matching Grant Program, New York State can further leverage higher education to better the lives of all New Yorkers through innovative ideas tailored to regional needs, such as revitalization efforts, job training, new business assistance, legal clinics, mentorship programs, elementary and secondary education outreach and community health programs. This matching grant program will allow for more partnerships and research, and will provide critical services and programs for New York state communities.

Conclusion

In closing, I would like to thank the Legislature for its support of students, and key aid programs that help them achieve a higher education. We have made great strides in strengthening the support network for our students, but as more and more high school students choose to pursue their college dreams, the demand continues to grow and we must work to ensure adequate resources are provided. Let us build on the momentum of last year and continue to invest in our students as we prepare and cultivate them to be the future stewards of New York State. I look forward to working with you this year, and I am happy to answer any questions.