



The State University of New York  
Student Assembly

Office of Communications

State University Plaza  
Albany, New York 12246

communications@sunysa.org  
www.sunysa.org

## Statement on One-House Budget Bills

March 16, 2017 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Arthur Ramsay ([arthur.ramsay@sunysa.org](mailto:arthur.ramsay@sunysa.org), 631-927-5097)

Following Monday's release of the one-house budget bills, the SUNY Student Assembly is calling on legislative leaders and the Governor to combine encouraging proposals from all sides to produce a budget that benefits the 600,000 students of SUNY and all New Yorkers.

Both legislative houses proposed the expansion of the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) for part-time students, a measure long supported by the Student Assembly. Under each proposal, TAP eligibility would be expanded to include part-time community college students meeting various criteria.

"We are pleased that legislators in the Assembly and Senate recognize that we can't leave part-time and non-traditional students out of the affordability discussion," said Patrick Gareau, Treasurer and a former Community Colleges Chair for the Student Assembly, on the TAP proposals.

The Student Assembly was pleased to see Maintenance of Effort restored starting in 2018 in both the Assembly and Senate plans, which would also include all mandatory and inflationary costs and make the program permanent.

The SUNY Student Telecounseling Network (SUNY STCN) is a new initiative spearheaded by the Student Assembly as a result of collaboration with SUNY System Administration and Senate Higher Education Committee Chair Ken LaValle. "We are incredibly excited to see the Senate support the proposal and hope the Assembly and Executive see fit to support this critical measure," said Rey Muniz III, the Student Assembly's Legislative Director. "Lives are at stake."

Both chambers rejected the Governor's proposed cuts to SUNY's childcare centers and restored the \$1.1 million allocation made in last year's enacted budget. The Student Assembly has repeatedly advocated for increased funding for childcare centers and lauds both houses for this addition.

The Student Assembly was again dismayed by the refusal of the Senate to move forward with the DREAM Act, as it has done year after year. Just one month ago, the SUNY Student Assembly called on the Senate to pass the DREAM Act, a move supported by the Governor and the Assembly, who went one step further to propose creating the DREAM Fund Commission.

President Marc Cohen added, “As we have called for time and time again, the State needs to provide adequate support for SUNY’s institutions to maximize affordability without triggering harmful spending cuts that undermine the University’s commitment to providing a high-quality education to New York’s students.”

As the budget negotiations come to a close, the SUNY Student Assembly will continue ensuring that all student voices are heard in the process.

**About the SUNY Student Assembly**

The Student Assembly of the State University of New York (SUNY SA) is the recognized student government organization representing the nearly 600,000 students of the State University of New York. Comprised of student leaders elected by their peers from across SUNY’s 64 campuses, SUNY SA is committed to empowering students throughout the state, and ensuring the representation of its members on the state and national level, as well as throughout the SUNY system.

###