



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Government Efficiency Task Force Probes Suny on Wasteful Spending Practices

JEFFREY D. KLEIN March 11, 2010

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Led by Senator Klein, Task Force Demands Answers on Excessive Overtime Pay and Overhead Costs

ALBANY – The Senate Task Force on Government Efficiency, chaired by State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Jeff Klein, probed officials from the State University of New York (SUNY) system at a public hearing Thursday regarding excessive spending on overtime pay and overhead costs. The hearing was the first of many the Task Force plans to conduct in an effort to examine spending at state agencies.

Late last year, Senator Klein's office conducted an investigation into SUNY spending and found that New York State could potentially save \$23 million dollars by reducing overtime costs at SUNY educational and medical institutions.

“We’re here today to demand more accountability and responsibility from one of our state’s largest institutions and spenders. SUNY is unnecessarily wasting millions of tax dollars a year in overtime pay and other overhead costs. For too long, we've let those working in state agencies get a free ride. Today, I'm putting everyone that works in state government on

notice - no more blank checks,” said State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Jeffrey D. Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester).

At the hearing, the Task Force heard testimony from Monica Rimai, Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Operations Officer of SUNY; James Lyman, Executive Director of Council 82, which represents law enforcement professionals across New York State; and Peter Barry, Executive Vice President of the SUNY Police Officers Union.

Senator Klein and his Task Force colleagues questioned attendees regarding SUNY’s excessive spending last year on overtime and personnel costs, and the potential impact of a consolidation of SUNY’s police force. Senator Klein also demanded answers from SUNY officials on their long-term plans for cutting administrative overhead costs and increasing efficiency.

The SUNY system has twenty-eight separate police offices, which duplicate administrative tasks such as purchasing supplies and equipping the force. Citing a report by the SUNY Police Officers Union, Klein’s investigation last year estimated that centralizing the SUNY police force could potentially save New York State at least \$3 million in the next year, while also making the SUNY police force more effective.

The Senate Task Force on Government Efficiency was formed to uncover inefficient government spending and develop productive solutions to put taxpayer dollars to better use. Chaired by State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Jeff Klein, the bipartisan Task Force was formally announced in March of 2010. It is comprised of Senators Darrel Aubertine, Brian X. Foley, Craig Johnson, Betty Little, George Maziarz, Tom Morahan, Diane Savino, Jose Serrano, Bill Stachowski, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and Dave Valesky.