



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

## Ub 2020 Passes the Senate

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY March 2, 2011

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HIGHER EDUCATION**



*WNY Delegation pushes legislation through Senate chamber; Senator Kennedy and Democratic colleagues send letter to bring legislators from both chambers and both parties to the table to devise a strategy for passage through Assembly*

ALBANY, N.Y. – In a display of bipartisan and statewide support for the revitalization of the Western New York economy, the State Senate approved the UB 2020 legislation by a vote of 55 to 1. Senator Timothy M. Kennedy, D-58th District, secured the votes of nearly all of his colleagues in the Democratic Conference, pushing the total number of votes in support of UB 2020 to a level higher than any of the previous Senate votes on the plan. It was after

Kennedy gave a passionate plea to his Democratic colleagues for Western New York's need for UB 2020 that a number of them changed their vote to support the measure.

In the past, the UB 2020 measure has not fared well in the Assembly. The revised version of the plan that passed Wednesday puts some of the Assembly's concerns to rest – including an annual tuition increase cap of \$375 and a measure that will hold tuition for families who make less than \$60,000 at 2010-11 measures.

While some revisions have been made, Senator Kennedy is determined to get the Assembly to approve the plan and send it to Governor Cuomo for his signature. For that reason, Senator Kennedy has called on his Democratic colleagues, who supported the UB 2020 legislation, to sign on to a letter sent to Assembly Speaker Silver, calling on legislators from both houses and from both parties to come together to raise any outstanding concerns and devise a strategy to pass UB 2020.

“A comprehensive strategy for passage is needed to ensure the UB 2020 plan makes it to the Governor's desk. The UB 2020 proposal presents a substantial opportunity to turn the Western New York economy around, and my colleagues in the Senate have proven they understand that. It's often during times of economic and fiscal crisis that we find the united energy and ground-breaking innovation to rebuild our economy stronger than it ever has been,” Senator Kennedy said. “A day after we hear of a report that ranks the Western New York region as the second-most-difficult place to find a job, it is fitting that we pass a piece of legislation that, if approved by the Assembly and signed by the Governor, will spark the ignition of a job creation machine for Western New York. We've passed this plan early with statewide, bipartisan support to signal to the Assembly and the Governor that it's time we delivered UB 2020, a job-creation plan critical to the economic future of Western New York.”

The letter – which was signed by the vast majority of the Democratic Conference – reads, “With broad bipartisan support from legislators of every region of the state, the Senate has passed 'UB2020' – critical legislation originally drafted by the Democratic Conference in 2009, which will fundamentally alter the economic development landscape of Western New York and apply a rational tuition policy for the University at Buffalo. It’s now time for Senators and Assembly Members to work together to guide the UB 2020 plan through the legislative process and deliver it to Governor Cuomo for his signature, this year.”