



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Seward Delivers SUNY Impact Aid to Cortland

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR May 5, 2017

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**CORTLAND, 05/05/17** -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) announced today that the recently adopted 2017-18 New York State budget includes, at his insistence, \$194,500 for the City of Cortland to help offset public safety costs generated due to being a SUNY host community.

**“For a second consecutive year, the City of Cortland will receive special state budget funding to help offset public safety costs related to hosting a SUNY campus,”** said Senator Seward. **“Our SUNY schools are a real asset – educating our future leaders, and helping drive the local economy.**

**However, there is a financial trade-off that goes overlooked and local taxpayers should not be left holding the bag. The SUNY Impact Aid funding is genuine mandate relief.”**

While developing legislation to deliver aid to all SUNY host communities, Senator Seward was able to start the process by instituting a “pilot program” beginning with the 2016-17 state budget and continuing this year. Both the cities of Cortland and Oneonta received \$200,000 last year and each will receive \$194,500 in the current fiscal year.

Senator Seward announced the funding during *Coffee with a Cop*, a program funded in part through last year’s SUNY Impact Aid allocation and one of several initiatives designed to enhance public safety and help with the redevelopment of Cortland’s downtown core.

**“A downtown community police officer is an inspired use of the SUNY Impact Aid that will have a ripple effect. The outreach program helps boost public safety and enhances economic development, a combination that will certainly equate to growth throughout Cortland,”** Seward added.

City of Cortland Mayor Brian Tobin said, “The SUNY Impact Aid is a valuable funding source that, combined with other revenue streams, is helping revitalize Cortland’s downtown. Senator Seward understands the big picture, and his continued support of this program is significant.”

City of Cortland Police Chief F. Michael Catalano said, “Policing and economic development may not sound like a natural connection, but with the SUNY Impact Aid, the Cortland PD is playing an important role in our city’s downtown redevelopment initiatives. *Coffee with a Cop* and other programs help bring police and the community together and will lead to a safer, thriving downtown. This is a winning collaboration and it is great to have Senator Seward on board.”

Cortland County Business Development Corporation Executive Director Garry VanGorder said, “Cortland’s downtown is experiencing a significant private sector reinvestment with

ongoing projects and new ventures that will come on-line shortly. It is essential that the downtown core is safe if we want to continue this positive trend. I applaud Senator Seward for his foresight and diligence in developing the SUNY Impact Aid initiative.”

SUNY Cortland President Erik Bitterbaum said, “The use of the SUNY Impact Aid to promote a safe and vibrant downtown is an extension of the town/gown relationship. A welcoming downtown encourages positive interactions between students and residents and can lead to our students deciding to make Cortland their permanent home.”

City of Cortland Alderman Adam Megivern, director of the Downtown Partnership said, “Senator Seward has always been a strong partner in helping grow our downtown. The SUNY Impact Aid helps provide a dedicated police presence, a key pillar to further developing our downtown core.”

Downtown property developer David McNeil said, “A safe downtown core is essential to helping promote private sector redevelopment and re-commercialization. Use of the SUNY Impact Aid to enhance police presence downtown is exactly what is needed to attract redevelopment capital.”

Significant student populations present several public policy challenges for local governments, one of which is providing adequate public safety services to both students and the public while striking the appropriate balance between other municipal needs and available resources.

**“I have introduced legislation to provide lasting mandate relief for SUNY host communities by shifting a portion of the police, fire, and code enforcement burden away from local governments. I am continuing to advocate for a long-term strategy that will focus on this and other cost burdens municipalities contend with,”** Seward concluded.

Senator Seward's legislation (S.3967), which includes a formula to distribute state aid to municipalities hosting four-year SUNY schools, has received the backing of local officials as well as the New York Conference of Mayors (NYCOM). The bill been referred to the Senate Finance Committee. Companion legislation (A.1920) has been introduced in the state assembly by Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2017-S3967**

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- Introduced
  
- ◦ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
  
- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
  
- ◦ Passed Assembly

- Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Provides state aid to municipalities to offset the costs and expenses of providing public safety services that are necessary as a result of the presence of a residential institution located in such municipality

January 31, 2017

In Senate Committee **Finance**

Sponsored by **James L. Seward**

Do you support this bill?