



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Seward Delivers SUNY Impact Aid to Cortland

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR May 4, 2018

| ISSUE: **MANDATE RELIEF, PROPERTY TAX RELIEF, POLICE, EMERGENCY SERVICES**



**CORTLAND, 05/04/18** -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) announced today that the recently adopted 2018-19 New York State budget includes, at his insistence, \$200,000 for the City of Cortland to help offset public safety costs generated due to being a SUNY host community.

**“For a third 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. This year’s award will bring the three-year total for the City of Cortland to \$594,500.

Senator Seward announced the funding during a ribbon cutting for Gorger, a new downtown Cortland restaurant. The new business is one of several new developments attributed to a safer, more hospitable downtown district in Cortland, thanks in large part to the addition of a dedicated community police officer funded in part by the SUNY Impact Aid.

**“Cortland has taken this special SUNY Impact Aid and put it to exemplary use. Special credit should go to Mayor Brian Tobin and Cortland Police Chief F. Michael Catalano for their vision and Community Police Officer Jesse Abbott, who has brought the perfect blend of policing and community interaction to the position. Downtown Cortland is seeing a full rebirth, with new businesses moving in and breathing new life in to historic buildings,”** Seward added.

City of Cortland Mayor Brian Tobin said, “The SUNY Impact Aid is a valuable funding source that has really helped us remake downtown Cortland. Senator Seward understands the big picture, and his continued support of this program is significant.”

City of Cortland Police Chief F. Michael Catalano said, “The Cortland Police Department prides itself on keeping the community safe and playing a prime role in enhancing the quality of life in our city. The SUNY Impact Aid has helped us create a safer, thriving downtown. This is a winning collaboration and it is great to have Senator Seward on board.”

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 continue to advocate for a long-term, permanent solution to provide SUNY host communities with consistent mandate relief. My legislation would shift a portion of the police, fire, and code enforcement burden away from local governments – and in turn, off the backs of local property taxpayers,”** 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?