



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

## Senate Approves LaValle Bills To Support SUNY, CUNY, And State's Health Science Centers

KENNETH P. LAVALLE June 14, 2018



June 13, 2018 - Senator Ken LaValle reports that Senate approved two bills to help further ensure the State University of New York (SUNY), the City University of New York (CUNY), and SUNY hospitals have the resources they need. The measures, sponsored by Senator LaValle would require five-year capital plans for SUNY and CUNY, and provide sustained funding for SUNY health science centers.

Senator LaValle, Chair of the Senate Higher Education Committee, said, "These two measures

are critically important. Both SUNY and CUNY's mandatory costs continue to increase, but State funding has not kept pace. A five-year capital plan for the public university systems will bring predictability in funding, provide for infrastructure improvements and ensure that students will learn in safe, state-of-the-art facilities. Maintenance of effort will properly fund the mandatory costs of the systems, bring both systems to their full potential and prevent further tuition increases at the students' expense. I am proud to sponsor this legislation in the Senate, and have worked with the Assembly Higher Education Chair, Assemblymember Deborah Glick, to ensure that we get these critical measures over the finish line this legislative session."

The first bill (S7236) would bring back five-year capital plans for SUNY and CUNY that were last enacted in 2008. It incorporates capital planning for SUNY and CUNY into the overall capital plan submitted to the Legislature and would require the Governor to submit five-year capital plans as part of the Executive Budget. This requirement would ensure that the facilities at the state's public higher education institutions receive the capital funding necessary to meet their annual critical maintenance needs. The first round of five-year capital plans expired during the 2012-2013 budget cycle, and until now, a capital plan has not been included in recent Executive Budgets for the Legislature's consideration.

There has been an ongoing lapse in the formation of a SUNY and CUNY five-year capital plan due to the Governor's vetoes of bipartisan, same-as versions of S7236 in 2015 and 2017. The Senate has passed this bill again because five-year capital plans were developed to ensure that the state's public colleges and universities would have the ability to plan for capital expenditures and substantially reduce the backlog of critical maintenance projects.

The second bill (S7259A) would clarify that SUNY's health science centers are intended to be

part of the state's "maintenance of effort" provision regarding the NY SUNY 2020 legislation in 2011, so that at a minimum, the institutions will receive prior year levels of funding from the state budget.

Although SUNY's hospitals are a major part of state universities' critical role in providing essential health care and academic services, state funding has consistently decreased to these institutions over the last decade due to budget cuts. Despite the need, the Governor vetoed bipartisan, same-as versions of S7259A in 2015 and 2017. The Senate passed this bill today to demonstrate its ongoing support of SUNY's health science centers and recognize that New York has a responsibility to at least partially compensate these hospitals for their crucial services to indigent populations, and in providing unique life-saving services not generally offered by private hospitals.

All of the bills have been transferred to the Assembly for consideration.

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