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# Protect SUNY

## **Predictable tuition increases would preserve programs, help students plan**

By News Editorial Board

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Raise my tuition, please!

Who would ever have thought that college students would get upset with the governor for not increasing tuition? That's exactly what happened recently when a student delegation representing the state's 465,000 public college students got together.

The students are advocating what college campus presidents have urged over the past several years, and that is for modest, regular tuition increases at the State University of New York, as long as the extra money is used to fund the campuses and -- this is important -- not just go straight to Albany's coffers.

Those "sweeps," in which money intended for college campuses has been pilfered to bolster Albany's bottom line, have occurred more or less regularly, though perhaps never to such a maddening degree as two years ago. That was when lawmakers and the governor snatched the \$620 tuition increase students had been forced to pay to help balance the state's budget.

It's no secret that New York, along with many other states, is facing a huge budget deficit. The SUNY Student Assembly, a statewide government organization, is rightly concerned that Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo's proposed budget does not include a tuition hike this year. Students are well aware that the lack of an increase means a lack of predictability.

Students and their parents want to be able to plan for steady, reasonable increases in tuition. What they don't want is to suddenly be hit with a huge increase because of something that occurred in Albany. Moreover, students don't want to see the phasing out of programs, which has occurred at several schools as SUNY has lost about one-third of its state support over the past three years.

College campus presidents at many of the 64 SUNY campuses have long supported a rational tuition policy. Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher recently stated that the system, facing a \$362 million cut under Cuomo's budget, should be allowed to enact a five-year tuition program that raises tuition on a predictable basis, although she has not specifically called for it this year. She also cautioned that revenues should be earmarked for campuses and not used to help the state balance its budget.

Appreciative of Cuomo's support for the UB 2020 plan that would bring thousands of students and jobs to downtown Buffalo and his inclusion of two of the three elements -- easier procurement rules for buying goods and services and lifting obstacles to campus deals with private companies for joint ventures -- both the chancellor and Student Assembly seek that third piece of the equation when it comes to rational tuition increases.

University at Buffalo President John B. Simpson has long been one of the key supporters of rational tuition increases and believes that the ability of campuses to set their own tuition rates, within certain limits, would result in a significant improvement to the system.

At the very least, it would help preserve those programs students and their parents are concerned about losing -- that is, if Albany can keep itself from grabbing those funds.

The governor and legislators should listen to the students' chants -- raise my tuition, please!

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## Comments

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**SORT:** **NEWEST FIRST** | OLDEST FIRST

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"What is a good education worth, by most standards the SUNY system is a bargain, If UB is going to stop its downward slide, increased resources certainly will be necessary. At this time tuition must be raised to ... "

Please. Students and parents cannot afford the tuition as it is now. College, these days, seems like the great scam placed on middle class families causing financial hardship. There needs to be more alternatives emphasized and created for non college students.

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**TOM BEYER, ORCHARD PARK, NY** on Mon Feb 14, 2011 at 05:14 PM

REPLY      FLAG AS INAPPROPRIATE

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"I see many flags being risen not about about government and taxes and a lot of contemporary topics. Thinking people begin to focus on being on the right side of history. After all which generation wishes to be hated by ... "

Bravo, Mr. Klein!

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**ROBERT H. MACCALLUM, SLOAN, NY** on Mon Feb 14, 2011 at 04:02 PM

REPLY      FLAG AS INAPPROPRIATE

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I see many flags being risen not about about government and taxes and a lot of contemporary topics. Thinking people begin to focus on being on the right side of history. After all which generation wishes to be hated by descendents? We all praise the Greatest Generation for their incredible efforts to raise the national standard of living and prove the benefits of education to their descendents. Now we have the Baby boom generation that must create the world their grand children must inhabit. We already see that questions of entitlements are challenged even by those who already receive the benefits. This nation is challenged by a surge of the third world peoples who are developing the skills and abilities to manage the business of the planet and grow rich and powerful in the process. They are using more limited resources than America has to produce a superior class of educated people. If we don't ensure education is as available to Americans now as it was from 1945 to 1965 our descendents will be the water carriers cursing us every step.

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**HAP KLEIN, TONAWANDA, NY** on Mon Feb 14, 2011 at 03:28 PM

REPLY      FLAG AS INAPPROPRIATE

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What is a good education worth, by most standards the SUNY system is a bargain, If UB is going to stop its downward slide, increased resources certainly will be necessary. At this time tuition must be raised to keep it from hemorrhaging faculty, staff and well qualified students. As an Alum it saddens me to see this outstanding center of learning not live up to its potential.

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**CHARLES TOMMASULO, FLUSHING, MI** on Mon Feb 14, 2011 at 02:51 PM

REPLY      FLAG AS INAPPROPRIATE

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Go to Artvoice and read the story about how The Buffalo News was hoodwinked into running its original story that SUNY students wanted a tuition increase. And today? The news is still at it. Students want to pay more? That, my friends is so out of it that even to suggest it in a supposedly respectable newspaper flies in the face of reason.

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**ROBERT H. MACCALLUM, SLOAN, NY** on Mon Feb 14, 2011 at 01:52 PM

REPLY

FLAG AS INAPPROPRIATE

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