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## Assembly cuts may hinder UB 2020

Business First of Buffalo - by [Alissa Kline](#)

The University at Buffalo's growth plan, UB 2020, continues to be at risk now that the state Assembly has cut proposed legislation from its budget resolution that would change State University of New York policies, UB President John Simpson said Monday.

Simpson called a mid-morning news conference asking the Western New York community to push for the reforms, which would allow SUNY schools to set scheduled tuition increases and lease SUNY-owned property to private parties.

"If Western New York and SUNY do not get these reforms, we simply can not do Western New York's UB 2020 plan," Simpson said during the event, which took place at UB's New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences. "That means our community doesn't get the jobs. It means we will not be able to build the downtown Buffalo medical campus that is so crucial for UB 2020 and for Buffalo's future."

UB officials said the state Assembly last week cut out all proposed pieces of the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act, a legislative bill proposed in January as part of Gov. David Paterson's proposed 2010-11 executive budget. The bill, which closely resembles last year's UB 2020 Flexibility and Economic Growth Act, would allow all SUNY and City University of New York campuses to raise tuition at their own discretion, retain tuition and other revenues and lease SUNY-owned property.

The state Senate, meanwhile, included the reforms in its budget resolution.

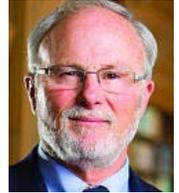
"That was a step forward and we appreciate it," Simpson said.

Yet neither body restored proposed cuts to the SUNY system in their respective resolutions.

UB 2020 is UB's plan to grow its three campuses – North, South and downtown – by adding more students, staff and faculty; creating 6,700 new jobs and 20,000 construction jobs; and pumping \$2 billion into the regional economy, all in order to become one of the nation's leading research universities.

Simpson said there are no plans to call it quits on UB 2020, but the next few weeks are critical for the UB 2020 vision.

The state budget is due April 1, but Paterson last week said he didn't believe it would be passed by that date because negotiations between himself and the Legislature were ongoing. The state is facing a budget shortfall of at least \$9.2 billion.



Simpson

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