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## UB 2020 Bill Passes Senate

Posted By [Joseph Spector](#) On March 2, 2011 @ 6:49 pm In [Uncategorized](#) | [No Comments](#)



<sup>[1]</sup>The state Senate overwhelmingly passed a bill today to give the University of Buffalo more flexibility in setting its own tuition rates and entering into economic development initiatives with the private sector.

The bill passed 55-1, with only Sen. Bill Perkins, D-Harlem, voting against it.

The bi-partisan collegiality over the measure was applauded by Democrats and Republicans, who expressed support for trying to help the upstate economy by backing the bill. It hasn't passed the Assembly, though.

"This has been identified as the number one priority in western New York. It cuts across numerous senate districts, numerous Assembly districts. Support exists in virtually every arena," said Sen. Mark Grisanti, R-Buffalo, who sponsored the bill and thus passed his first bill since taking office in January.

Sen. Thomas Libous, R-Binghamton, said he would like to see similar steps taken for SUNY's other university centers, including SUNY Binghamton in his district. But he said helping UB was a positive first step.

"Like UB, BU is the economic engine of the Southern Tier," Libous said. "Without it, it would be a different place."

University at Buffalo President John B. Simpson praised the bill's passage in the Senate and applauded the western New York delegation.

"Today's action will focus the Legislature's attention on how these reforms are absolutely necessary as a way to provide the state's students with access to world-class public higher education and give UB the opportunity to help revitalize the western New York economy through academic and research excellence," he said in a statement.

Sen. Tim Kennedy, D-Buffalo, wrote a letter to Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, D-Manhattan, urging the Assembly to work with the Senate to get the bill into law. Here's his letter.

[senate dems ub2020 letter to silver](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

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[1] Image: <http://statepolitics.lohudblogs.com/files/2011/03/New-York-Senate.jpg>

[2] senate dems ub2020 letter to silver: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/49889241/senate-dems-ub2020-letter-to-silver>