

UB 2020 Proposal Passes State Senate

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ALBANY, NY - The New York State Senate passed a revised **UB 2020 proposal** on Wednesday afternoon.

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The proposal stalled in the Assembly in 2010.

State Senator Mark Grisanti, R-Buffalo sponsored the bill.

The measure would give the University of Buffalo discretion in setting tuition rates and flexibility in developing public-private partnerships. The university, as well as other campuses in the 64-campus system, has wanted the bill for years, but it has been tied up with the needs of other campuses, as well as the budget battle last year.

But Grisanti said the measure has garnered more support than in prior years because of some changes to it, as well as it focusing now only on UB. He said he expects the same latitude could soon be expanded to the other university centers within SUNY.

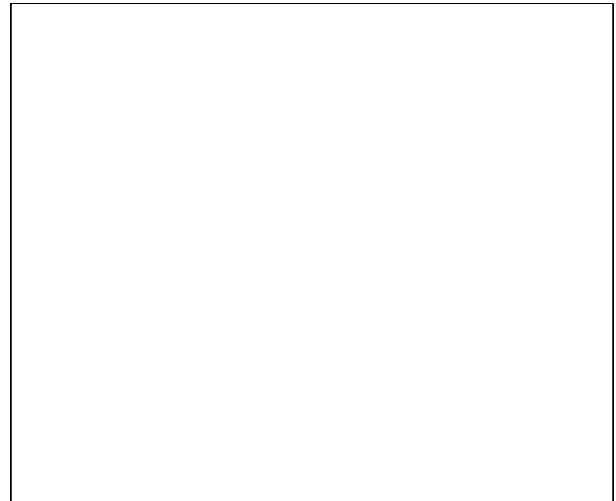
"We're hoping that seeing these reforms in play will pave the way for the rest of the system to require the same flexibility," he said.

"A comprehensive strategy for passage is needed to ensure the UB 2020 plan makes it to the Governor's desk. The UB 2020 proposal presents a substantial opportunity to turn the Western New York economy around, and my colleagues in the Senate have proven they understand that. It's often during times of economic and fiscal crisis that we find the united energy and groundbreaking innovation to rebuild our economy stronger than it ever has been," Senator Kennedy said.

The measure is being sponsored in the Assembly by Assemblyman Robin L. Schimminger, D-Kenmore. But the Assembly was not scheduled to take up the bill Wednesday.

"The passage of this bill would be an investment in the future of UB, Western New York and its residents. I strongly urge

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my colleagues in the Assembly to follow the Senates lead and pass UB2020," says Assemblyman Dennis Gabryszak (D).

The bill aims to satisfy concerns from some lawmakers that giving SUNY schools independence over tuition increases would hurt poorer students. As a result, the tuition increases would be limited to \$375 a semester, and 15 to 20 percent of tuition revenues would be directed toward financial aid for poorer students.

"The reforms passed today would bring UB in line with the nation's premier public research universities. They allow UB to implement its long-term physical growth plan, encourage academic development, and update its regulatory structure which is ill suited for the global market place in which UB must compete. This legislation is pro-economy, pro-education, pro-students and pro-Western New York," said Senator Patrick Gallivan (R), a co-sponsor of the legislation.

Also, the SUNY Board of Trustees would have to sign off on any tuition increases. The prior bill would have let it solely to SUNY schools themselves. Currently, tuition increases must be approved by the state Legislature for all campuses.

Also, for families making less than \$60,000 a-year, tuition would be frozen at at the 2010-11 level -- affecting about 30 percent of the school's enrollment.

"We are very grateful to Sens. Grisanti, Maziarz, Gallivan, Ranzenhofer and Kennedy for their steadfast support of

these forward-looking policy recommendations," University at Buffalo President John B. Simpson said. "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."

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